

FEBRUARY

# APOLLO



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# CURRENT SHOWS AND COMMENTS BY PERSPEX

## GROUPS AND GRADUATES



"SOURCE OF THE RHINE." By FRANCIS TOWNE.

From The Gilbert Davis Collection Exhibition: Arts Council. PERSPEX's choice for the Picture of the Month.

**D**ESPITE the considerable number of galleries, large and small, which grace—we hope they grace—the West End of London around Bond Street and St. James's and have their outposts as far East as Whitechapel and as far West as Kensington, the problem of giving artists, especially the lesser-known artists, an opportunity of showing their work is ever present. In these days, too, when the standard of technique has been relaxed and the will to paint is regarded as almost sufficient warrant for the deed, the professional finds himself very often competing with the go-getting amateur; and the professional ranks in themselves have to accommodate the vast crowds of student artists who are encouraged or permitted to train as artists with ex-Service grants. All this makes for quantity in art, but not quality.

Somehow out of this welter at the bottom must emerge the few men and women who have creative genius and by sheer work achieve technical power. Somehow we want these few to graduate to the publicity of one-man shows where we can see their work in isolation and where reputations are really established. The Sunday-painters, the "have-a-go-before-you-die" amateurs, are amusing enough in their way; but this business of art is too important to treat them seriously save for the rare individual here and there who is willing to treat art seriously and devote a lifetime to its service. One is confronted all too often by the statement, made boastfully, that this or that artist who is occupying space in a gallery "had never touched a brush" until two years ago or some similar recent period. The information is invariably superfluous in face of the results; but a well-planned cocktail party and an attractive story for the gossip columnists will give a deceptive air of enthusiastic activity to the private view and may dot the frames with an impressive display of sales spots.

The organisation of an avowedly amateur exhibition such as the East End Academy at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, where one sees pictures by artists who live or work in the East End—often quite good pictures—is another matter, for here there is no deceptive air of professionalism; and, unless an artist is taking his work professionally, no competition with serious work.

Beyond this stands the experimental effort being made by the R.B.A. by offering the hospitality of their fine galleries to "The Young Contemporaries," for here the earnest student artist or the newly-fledged professional will have their slight chance of showing—slight because of the enormous number who send in. Gradually, however, from such an exhibition a few names will emerge. A difficulty is that we are confronted by one of those enormous shows of hundreds of pieces of artwork which it is almost impossible to compass. This is a difficulty even at the exhibition of the R.B.A. itself, where more established men working with all the experience of painters of standing nevertheless get lost in a surrounding clamour.

The difficulty of the big mixed show was very apparent at the exhibition of the London Group, the first to be held at the reopened New Burlington Gallery. The London Group has established itself as the most comprehensive of the advanced societies and has a resounding list of names on its membership roll. Ruskin Spear, with one foot firmly planted in the academic camp as an A.R.A., is its President; Elliott Seabrooke, that most scrupulous technician, its Vice-President. Its exhibitions are an opportunity to see what is happening in experimental art, and there is enough work by unknown painters and sculptors to look out for new promise. Personally, I was very attracted by Elliott Seabrooke's two landscapes. His technique carries on from the point to which Seurat took Post-Impressionism, for he very carefully builds up his picture

in pointillist style, but, as Seurat did, organises the flicks of brilliant colour into definite form, so as to correct that loss of architectonic quality which became the bane of even the greatest Impressionists. Actually Mr. Seabrooke has based his design on the formalism of the "Golden Rule" deduced from the paintings of the Old Masters. This careful technique, allied to his own fine sense of colour and a romantic feeling for nature, gives Elliott Seabrooke's work a quality, a spirit of domination over material, which is too often lacking in the younger contemporaries of this haphazard age. It cannot but lose a little in the sense of freedom, but for a critic who has looked at several hundred pictures indulging in almost limitless freedom, this is a loss which can be borne with equanimity.

Ruskin Spear's own characteristic painting also gives a feeling of power. In his case, of course, there is the art which hides artifice. His "Old Woman with a Fur Collar" in this exhibition is a brilliant piece of painting, carried out almost in monochrome of brown. It is intensely human and alive. One would wish the more suave painters of the Royal Portrait Society whose work depends upon the opulent robes et modes of their bejewelled sitters would look at this plain, old, poorly-dressed woman as a study in portraiture. His "Baker Street" was a characteristic public-house piece, in that vein we now recognise where the dark tones from which indistinct forms emerge, the touches of vivid colour, render the fug of the "local" which is enjoying under his leadership such a vogue in contemporary art. The fascination of the London Group show is the reminder which it gives of the multitudinous ways of painting and sculpture in our time; for, like Ruskin Spear, most of the artists have sent highly individual and characteristic contributions. The society is performing a catholic function which will include, say, Pasmore's "Abstract, Square Motif" and Duncan Grant's brightly-coloured, impressionist "Landscape"; William Scott's "Still Life" where a few simple objects are rendered with his usual cold colour and hard intensity of form, and Jack Yeats' "It was the Schooner Hesperus," a scene in a cinema where all form is lost in a wild impasto of terrific colour. But one could go on citing the extremes; for the London Group accepts the sponsorship of all extremes. Sometimes of extremes of silliness, as when a half-dozen map-like patches of uninteresting simple colour are called "Variation on Renoir," in the sense, I assume, that a few toots on a tin whistle might be called "Variation on Chopin's Prelude No. 7." Over against this I would set a deeply felt and ably painted little study almost in black and white with touches of deep green called "Nun in Bloomsbury," by David Cooper. The name is not familiar to me; the picture was small and placed nowhere in particular on those crowded walls, but I left the gallery with a distinct memory of that tiny white-coiffed figure set against the dark background of a Bloomsbury street. It was for me more effective than that other "Figure in a Landscape" by Eileen Agar, the largest, the best placed, the brightest, and the most strident work in the exhibition. Miss Agar's almost terrifying abstraction may be hailed as brilliant, intellectual, highly individual, a *tour de force* of modernist design and painting; and, indeed, it is all these things. Let us agree, therefore, that it may simply be a matter of taste that it made no appeal to me, but I moved away from it instinctively, as one chooses a table in a restaurant as far as possible from the orchestra. Art which is too insistent has a tendency to defeat its own ends, as Keats pointed out in one of his understanding letters.

I encountered the same phenomenon in a new man whose work is starring at the Redfern Gallery, heralded there by a fanfare of unqualified applause by both Matthew Smith and Jacob Epstein. This Theodore Garman also paints large and very brightly. One canvas of twenty-four square feet, "Spanish Madonna and Flowers," has been bought by Epstein, who, it is said, acquired it when he saw it by chance at the picture restorers after the young artist had (a) slashed it in despair, and (b) repented, and taken it to be repaired. Matthew Smith, equally admiring, writes a foreword to the catalogue which is a masterpiece of inconsequence. It commences:

"About the paintings of Theodore Garman I can only say that I look at them with wonder, admiration, and even astonishment. Surely this is an event unequalled in British Painting since Van Gogh. Since Van Gogh was, I believe, not British, we can thank Mr. Garman for almost having made him so." I confess that I do not know whether Mr. Smith's saying, his looking, or Mr. Garman's painting is the antecedent to the demonstrative pronoun *this* in the second sentence. Still less do I understand the reference to Van Gogh and his sudden merger with British Painting, especially as Theodore Garman's painting bears very little resemblance to that of Van Gogh. If after this one dare use the word "surely" it is surely very bad for any young artist to be hailed with such ebullient irrelevance.

The best of Mr. Garman's pictures was one displayed in the doorway of the gallery which bore a noticeable resemblance not to Van Gogh but to Epstein's own Epping Forest landscapes. The others were too strident, too large, blatant, unrestrained in colour, too rococo for my taste. One has to reiterate the aspect of personal preference, for in this age of the outside poster and the loud-speaker, sensitiveness and a love of subtlety may be a sign of weakness. Certainly the over-exuberance of this artist's work which offends me I also regard as a fault in the painting of both Epstein and Matthew Smith; but as this latter artist has been chosen to stand alongside Constable to represent British Painting at the Venice Biennale his style evidently finds very marked favour in some official quarters where these mysterious choices are made.

So at the Redfern Gallery I left the tumult and the shouting of Mr. Garman's pictures for the quiet delight of an exhibition there of Rowland Suddaby's work. Mr. Suddaby has long been accepted as a sensitive water-colour painter, though one might be worried at times by his trick of scattering accents of dark tone all over a picture at the expense of his composition. This new exhibition is happier in this respect, and in a general broadening and synthesising on his method. Some of the best of the work is in oils, and although the subjects and compositions are very characteristic there is a breadth and simplicity which is a pleasing development in his art.

A third artist showing at the Redfern is Martin Battersby. His canvases are small as Mr. Garman's are large, meticulously painted and organised as the other's are splashy and diffuse. They often have curious subjects: a house of cards; motor-horn and pink ribbon; dolls in a wine glass; but they are not Surrealist since they are not the fantasy of dream or the subconscious, but have a hard objectivity dictated by some definite intellectual process; a queer, fascinating artist who shirks nothing in the terrifying realism of these things in their unreal juxtaposition.

One exhibition where one did enjoy absolutely a painter's vision was that of Baron Isodore Opsomer, which, sponsored by the Belgian Ministry of Education and opened by the Belgian Ambassador, has been held at the R.W.S. Galleries. This is traditional painting at the modern end of the tradition. Lovely colour, magnificent design, strong bold painting: everything one wants is here, whether in the landscapes or the portraits. Baron Opsomer is accepted as the foremost of Belgian painters, and is the Director of the Institut des Beaux-Arts at Antwerp, the oldest of the Flemish Art schools. His rich strong colour is itself a sensuous delight, but in his case it has none of that over-ripe feeling which I have deplored in Matthew Smith's work. He simplifies forms, dramatises his effects, deliberately imposes an artist's vision upon nature. The result is never vulgar or garish; there is always just that sense of reserve which is an essential ingredient in great art. The landscapes were things of beauty; and the portraits of some of the most important people in Belgium of our day had none of the suavity which so often mars the portraits of important folk. Baron Opsomer is before all else a painter, and the sheer quality of his paint is his first asset. It is work of this kind which shows that fine painting can go on without recourse to jigsaw composition or ape-man subject matter, and yet remain virile.

I did find Alan Clutton-Brock's exhibition at the Marlborough a trifle too polite. Mr. Clutton-Brock also stands at the hither end of the—this time English—tradition. His discreet impressionism goes to East Anglia for its charming subjects, or to the flower subjects almost sacred to the English manner. The exciting possibilities of East Anglian scenery, as Constable knew, lie in the interaction between the ever-changing skies and the watery landscape. I felt that by taking so few risks with his skies, most of which were just summer-day blue, Alan Clutton-Brock had lost the sense of artistic adventure. There was no drama either in the composition. Nature is all the better for being bullied a little by the artist, and this artist has been altogether too ready to stand aside and let her have all her own way. It is always worth remembering that Constable moved the tree in the "Leaping Horse" landscape.

One other exhibition by a new artist, which if it did not quite succeed did not fail for lack of an adventurous spirit, was that of Max Chapman at the Leger Gallery. This artist is a colourist, and the good sense of colour stands him well. He has contented himself, too frequently, with still-life subjects which are a little too easy, but once or twice—as in "Posing" or "Boy by Mirror"—he has essayed a difficult work and produced a challenging result. He can afford to escape from plates of fish (of which there are far too many in contemporary painting) and from dead rabbits (of which his own single bloody example is enough) and, developing carefully his control of form, continue figure painting with its real test of power.



"YOUNG GIRL." By BARBARA HEPWORTH.  
From the Exhibition "New Sculpture and Drawings by Barbara Hepworth" at the Lefevre Gallery.

At the Lefevre, John Minton has been having an exhibition of Spanish painting, chiefly of bullfighters whose gay and stiffly-patterned costumes evidently attracted him. Minton's highly stylised and very static painting has not, I should have said, found a congenial theme, for these bullfighters look incapable of the agility to play any bull (except the one which Minton depicts). One had hoped that in the arabesque of vegetation patterning the spaces of landscapes of fascinatingly complicated design Minton had found a path for himself, but this Spanish adventure is a step back. One wash drawing, "Sleeping Figure," redeemed the exhibition, for that was delightful.

The February Exhibition at the Lefevre Gallery is of recent sculpture and drawings by Barbara Hepworth. This artist has been invited to represent contemporary British Sculpture at the Venice Biennale and therefore a special interest attaches to this exhibition of her work over here. Personally I have always enjoyed Barbara Hepworth's work best when she is at her most abstract, taking some simple or convoluted form and visually working out its relationships, often even its internal structural significance. The over-simplified studies of the human form with primitive distortion are really too easy, too merely emotional, for her to be working in that vein. Her drawings are especially sensitive and sculptural, and it is well that these are being included in the exhibition.

On this subject of sculpture two other matters demand attention. The first is an apology to Dora Gordine, whose first name persistently appeared as "Cora" in my appreciation of her Leicester Gallery show—one of those mistakes so obvious that one reads the proofs without noticing it even in repetition. Happily Miss Gordine's name and work are alike well known. My apologies, nevertheless.

The other matter is to notice the very fine exhibition of sculpture by Benno Elkan which is on at Wildenstein's. The work is chiefly portraiture, including the massive portrait of Winston Churchill, and sensitive studies of such public men as Lord Beveridge and Toscanini. Mr. Elkan is also showing the now famous David Candelabra and sketches for a new work, "The Great Menorah," now in progress. A fully illustrated article on the English Portraits appeared in our November issue.

## SHAFTS FROM APOLLO'S BOW A Proposition in Logic

IN discussions of art matters, especially those public discussions which at times take place on the air, I am often a trifle disconcerted by one recurring line of argument advanced by the experimental school of thought. It made one of its regular appearances recently when Mr. Michael Ayrton—himself a very good artist—was speaking as one of the team in the fine "Any Questions" Programme which is the old Brains Trust gone West and all the better for the change. Somebody boldly took the opportunity of Mr. Ayrton's presence to ask approximately whether in the opinion of the team the distortions and uglinesses of modern art are justified and legitimate. Immediately, like a jack-in-the-box when the lid is sprung open, came the answer, uttered with magnificent fervour in the manner *ex cathedra* which evoked salvoes of applause: in the past pioneers have been doubted or derided—Turner, Whistler, the Pre-Raphaelites, Keats for his poetry, somebody else for his music. *Ergo*, all unappreciated pioneers are right; all critical obstruction to their acceptance is a brake on the progress of the arts; all such criticism is therefore a betrayal of the critical function besides being utterly useless, like Canute ordering back the inflowing tide.

This resounding argument is given an air of absolute conviction by the quotation of certain classic instances of critical abuse which in the event recoiled upon the hapless critics. Dickens' Household Word about Millais' "Christ in the House of His Parents" is a regular gambit: the "hideous, wry-necked blubbery red-haired boy in a nightgown who appears to have received a poke in the hand . . . in an adjacent gutter," the woman "so horrible in her ugliness that she would stand out from the rest of the company as a monster in the vilest cabaret in France or the lowest gin-shop in England." The grand purple Dickensian phrases (how he must have enjoyed himself!) positively roll out. Add to these Ruskin's ill-advised comment on Whistler's "Battersea Bridge": "Never have I expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face," and the case is regarded as complete.

It may be that I am handicapped by some training in elementary logic with Jevons' excellent textbook of that title as my guide, but I have never yet seen the force of this argument. One of the earliest fallacies to be dealt with in that simple aid to clarity of thought is the confusion between part and whole.

This animal is white: this animal is a mouse: *ergo*, all white animals are mice.

Simple enough nonsense in the obvious world of white mice and polar bears, but the *ergo* is equally irrelevant when we apply the same fallacy to art.

This critic was opposed to a pioneer artist: this critic was mistaken: *ergo*, all critics opposed to pioneer artists are mistaken.

Or, it can go this way:

This artist was a pioneer genius: this artist was misunderstood: *ergo*, all misunderstood pioneer artists are geniuses.

As we examine more clearly even the favourite arguments and most rhetorical instances of this engaging sophistry we find more complications in their all-too-simple deductions. For Ruskin, who was so demonstrably wrong about Whistler on this occasion, was so demonstrably right about Turner on most others; and Turner's non-acceptance and subsequent recognition is one of the stock citations. Were there ever times when the critics thought a pioneer bad, and, in fact, he was bad? In an aside one suspects that these sons of progress would now be the first to agree that Millais' work was "odious, revolting and repulsive." Certainly one of the most emphatic of modernist poet-critics once told me with a sort of shudder that he "would not read Keats' poetry because it would ruin his ear with its saccharine wordiness" and this sounds suspiciously like the famous Edinburgh reviewer's advice to Keats to "go back to his galley-pots." But this may be confusing the simple issue, that dire confusion of *some* and *all* which is at least a basic fallacy. We will not here consider others such as the false analogy which regards art as a kind of arterial road along which you steadily progress to a point, past it, and on to the next. Nor will we wonder what the pioneer artists of to-day have to complain about from their critics. So far as I can see, an artist only has to fling his pot of paint or really depict "a woman so horrible in her ugliness that she would stand out, etc.," to have the whole critical tribe on their knees in ecstatic admiration. Of course, they may be wrong. Remember Ruskin, remember Dickens, remember . . .



# EPSTEIN

BY MARY SORRELL

THE light radiated by great works of art falls into the shadows left by past genius, and no one more clearly cherishes tradition than Epstein, nor reveals more poignantly the drama of the human race, with its raw emotions, its carnal tendencies and crudities, and the spirituality that is born of suffering. For Epstein's large compositions and many of his portraits almost invariably brink upon tragedy, and whatever movement is depicted, it is never the urge to escape, but a force fighting against the impediments or sorrows that beset it. Even "The Girl with the Gardenias," invested with such exquisite sensitiveness that she quivers on the verge of life, encounters some element that we cannot see, and she hesitates as though listening to an echo, her frame tingling with the nervous tension of the sculptor. The flowers fall from her startled hands, fluttering to the ground, and she appears haunted by a dream, a fear or a sound as it pauses upon her face. A transparent drapery is lightly moulded over her body and there is no exaggeration of the gentle contours. In the surroundings of Battersea Park during the exhibition of sculpture there in 1948, "The Girl with the Gardenias" was placed in her rightful setting, so much a part of nature and of the wonder of creation.

The abuse that has been showered upon Epstein from time to time seems far remote in the quietness of his home and studio, though he will talk about it, a little saddened, with the wild fire of genius bursting from his eyes. He will point out his treasures: an Egyptian carving, a Matthew Smith painting, or a large picture by a young artist, as yet unknown. He has theories on art but no intellectual summaries. "I am a sculptor," he says. And that in itself is sufficient.

New York was his birthplace, but he became a naturalised British subject many years ago, and has returned only twice to America. His well-to-do Polish-Russian parents bore a large family, and he was not dogged by poverty when a student.

"I always made money as a boy," he said, "by selling my drawings at school to other pupils, and I did a certain amount of illustrating. I cannot remember a time when I didn't wish to be a sculptor, but of course I began by drawing and painting."

Epstein attended numerous art schools for three years.

"Perhaps I stayed too long. Most students now, after six months or six days, are already artists!"

In Paris, he studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and also at Julians . . . "Jean

Paul Laurens once looked at my drawing and then at the model and walked away without saying a word. He didn't think me worth criticising!"

A small Egyptian carving on the mantelpiece evoked memories of "Night" and "Day" (1930), the two carvings in Portland stone on St. James's Park Underground Station. They are a reasonable height from the ground, and can be seen easily from the other side of the road. The stone is weathered, adding to their stature, and they are so much a part of the architecture that they sink into the austere background whilst remaining a distinguishing focal point. Their simple geometrical planes are imaginative and dignified. "Night," with her inscrutable shrouded head, raises her arm maternally above the child sleeping across her knees. She might be a sphinx in the



(Left) Madonna and Child.  
Courtesy Sally Ryan.

(Right) The Sun God.  
Courtesy Jacob Epstein.



Dr. Vaughan Williams, O.M.

Reproduced by courtesy of Dr. Vaughan Williams.

desert, thousands of years old, by the imagery she incites. The curves of the design sweep down and across, descending upon the earth with the drama of darkness, fusing straight and curved lines. Even the strange superhuman face follows in the same







(Left)  
The Visitation.  
Courtesy Tate Gallery.

(Right)  
Girl with Gardenias.  
Courtesy Aberdeen Art  
Gallery.



emotion that is characteristic of his art. What he found in life he gave to his sculpture, conveying the bewildering manifestations of happiness which, in the next breath, are overcome by sorrow. The fire and sensuality of his modelling, with its miraculously graduated tones that seem to shiver and pulsate, recall Rodin, but the secret of Rodin's joy does not belong to Epstein. Rather is it the secret that Rembrandt held, for when we gaze long and deeply before either, we are mystified by the penetration of a soul through the stillness of bronze or paint.

In 1919 Epstein gave us the haunting bronze "Helene," part classical and part romantic, and full of lyrical chords. The girl's head and shoulders are tenderly poised, and her hand clasps the piece of drapery upon her breast, leaving an imaginary arm in space. Her pensive features, and the supple feeling of flesh that we have grown to anticipate from Epstein, flow in curvilinear movements which are balanced by the vertical lines of the arm and neck, all interwoven with the music of an unhurried theme.

As one might expect, he models rapidly in clay, but stone carving is slow work.

"If you want to become a sculptor you must really end by training yourself," he says. "I had no struggle for recognition because as soon as I received a large commission it was acclaimed. That was in my early days, but later I had heaps of struggles against officialdom, and now I am attacked on both sides!"

From Epstein's many figures it is difficult to single out a few. "The Sun God," a bas-relief, begun in 1910 and resumed in 1931, is at present in the sculptor's studio. Its force is tremendous, and in the Egyptian formality of design there is fresh and abounding vitality. It has rather the appearance of a figure belonging to a frieze, and the flat bold planes are violently contrasted with the finely chiselled rays of the head-dress, the texture of which is continued behind the figure, producing an extraordinary flaming effect. The masses are evenly distributed, and light shed on the stone from any direction would heighten its subjective interpretation.

Then we have "The Visitation" (1926), which is in the Tate Gallery, and which speaks with so personal a vision. A slight woman stands mutely gazing through half-closed eyes into the unknown, as she listens to the Voice telling her of the miracle that has befallen her. The heavy folds of the dress accentuate her thin frail body, and she clasps her hands, wonderfully moulded, in resignation. Her two plaits of hair untied upon her shoulders add to her passive humility, uniting the sharp bony structure of the head and neck with the body. This composition is profoundly moving in its disciplined treatment, and, like all Epstein's modelling, it is the flowering of an inner compulsion, as though he dissects the seed of truth at its core, thrashing out its problems when he builds up the foundation and incorporating them in his plasticity, emphasizing always the two elements that compose life—the despair that overwhelms, and the rapture that intoxicates. "The Visitation," so reverent that she is devoid of spiritual conflict, and so human that

direction, and there is a fine feeling of weight and permanence about the group.

"Day," conceived as two figures arising whilst remaining static, is an idea in complete opposition to "Night." In the rectangular design there is an interplay of triangles and horizontal lines. Here the child stretches his arms and his profile upwards, his body supported by the powerful hands of man. The features and shape of the broad face expand outwards, as do the four arms, spreading in a slow opening movement. These two compositions are pregnant with meaning, achieving their purpose pictorially and so satisfying the aesthetic relationship between art and its functionary purpose.

Epstein is no exception in being first influenced by the great masters, and by his many pilgrimages to the Louvre. Ironically he says—"but anyone can be influenced by books now. Very few will submit themselves to the hard way. Artists turn to the primitives who are easily misunderstood. Much of the modern work is ugly. Perhaps I am old-fashioned—it doesn't appeal to me."

In his early days, though, Epstein yielded to the urge to experiment with modern methods. He did a number of carvings, including one called "Doves." This is a most sensuous and lovely design from which all detail is abstracted, reducing form to the essence of simplification, with a line that has a Chinese flawless. There was "The Rock Drill" of 1912 and "Venus" of 1917, invented in masses of angular and circular accents in a rocking rhythm, which cause the eye to travel upwards from the base.

Of this period he says, "I am not sure whether my ideas on sculpture have changed. I tried cubism, then dropped it after a while because there was no satisfaction in it for me. It is certainly much easier to do; anyone can manage it. I cannot see anything in modern art, and it is high time someone spoke out, for everybody is taken up in this modern trend."

Epstein's early busts were much under the influence of the Italian school, with their reflective beauty and quiet grandeur, and sometimes they had the appearance of antiquity. But gradually they changed, becoming more intense, and charged with the personal

she is just an ordinary woman, transcends reality by the inexplicable touch of the sculptor. His subdued compassion is that of one inspired by an occult quantity.

Rather similar in execution, though much more intense and emotional, is "The Madonna and Child" (1927). Here are two figures, a boy and his mother, both blessed with immortality, but enveloped in the cares of mankind to such an extent that one is torn between the suffering they represent and their monumental grandeur. This Madonna, Indian perhaps, is completely different from the angelic smooth-browed and haloed type we are accustomed to seeing, for in her face, so infinitely suffering, lies a grief that dominates the group. The child, with his wide pitiful eyes, has long forgotten his innocent fun, and he timidly half-stretches his arms, hesitating to open them further. The pattern of the four hands, the tender protecting strength of the mother, and the wistful lightness of the child, merge into the rhythm of the drapery, loosely folded over the crisp structure, sometimes in the merest ripples, and at others in broad solemn bands. The movement in the group, surging with undertones, flows as softly as liquid bronze. It possesses a Renaissance quality and a certain ecstasy that is hard to define apart from the religious content. There is no laughter in Epstein's work, but a magical swiftness that causes the eye to glide over it without interruption, and later, to reflect. The mastery of the artist over his medium, and his sensuous enjoyment of the cold dispassionate clay, is like one possessed in his mad triumph at discovering the perfect accord between heart and mind.

Unlike many sculptors of to-day, Epstein mostly uses models. "When it comes to imagination," he says, "I use my knowledge. Nature never hurts a great artist, though some pretend it does."

The absorbing human interest that burns so fiercely throughout his sculpture shows varied facets, and is particularly evident in his portraits. Even the heads of his figures are portraits in themselves, whether representative of a certain model or not. Whatever the composition suggests, the head must likewise agree in assuming a definite cast, so that the eye travels downward. The face, all important as the vehicle through which the soul radiates, cannot take secondary place. His resourcefulness at combining calm and broken surface textures is admirable, and there is no superficiality. The interpretation of concentrated thought, sometimes withdrawn and sometimes stark and violent, produces a lasting remembrance, and starts a rumination of one's own in much the same way as Rembrandt.

A recent bronze of Vaughan Williams, the composer, is a splendid example of Epstein's portraiture. His slightly larger-than-life head is tilted over to the right. The eyes, turned to the left, seem to follow one round, and it is incredible how much expression the sculptor has put into the hollow scooped-out irises. The sensitive mobile face with its aquiline nose and mouth, has a rich and luscious modelling, and the bushy brows, quizzically raised, question one. But the actual mood is that of a dreamer immersed in his dreams, and in a way we see the composer's mind improvised by the crucial hands of the sculptor.

The heated controversy over "Lucifer" when it appeared in the Leicester Galleries, and its ultimate haven in Birmingham, only followed the usual course of a new work by Epstein. The figure's



Lucifer.  
Courtesy Birmingham Art Gallery.

magnificently detailed modelling (especially the back) and careful homogeneous structure were classic in form, and its presence somehow uncanny. Beneath the skylight, with the autumn sunshine pouring on to the golden bronze, "Lucifer" stood as though he had just alighted on earth, the essence of evil with the covering of a god. His face had a satanic and sinister magnetism, and the whole figure, tenuously graceful, was woven in the same spirit as the head. The wings, still unclosed from his descent, were part of the imaginative conception, and were balanced halfway by the upturned hands, their fingers hovering in the manner of birds' claws. These were balanced again by the feet placed apart, the left leg bearing the weight, and fixed with stability on the ground, but at the same time giving the impression of something about to soar from it. The long draped skirt and ornamental bands around the body added to his fantastic physiognomy, so animated and proud . . . so enigmatic and silent.

One can only wonder how—how is it achieved? How can the dull clay lumped in a bin reach such a thrilling climax? What is the explanation between the sculptor and his medium . . . what folly even to try to fathom.

Epstein is a man of simple tastes whose sculpture reflects his outlook on life. His keen observation into the peculiari-

ties of nature is such that he does not hesitate to trace the minor and major variations in each side of the face. Often one eye (as in the Madonna) is totally different from the other, or even the shape of one cheek. Nonchalance towards craftsmanship he cannot tolerate, and to label him as classical or modern would be untrue. Like many another genius of his day, he falls into the category of both, and in his last exhibition he showed numbers of small bronze negroes in poses of arrested movement, earthbound and erotic, with the agility of animals. Now, in the seclusion of his studio, he is carving a new figure in Hopton Wood stone; problematic maybe, but not more incoherent or challenging than any original work of art.

It is perhaps this challenge that so vividly colours Epstein's sculpture, and which might subconsciously be directed to the liberty of our civilization, for it arouses an articulate response in everyone, whether it be antipathy or exaltation—war or peace. Thus the artist becomes an ambassador of the people. Into his imagination we project our own. He opens our minds and he clarifies our eyes.

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# Meissen Porcelain in the Cecil Higgins Museum, Bedford

BY M. A. PALMER

THE "Dresden Shepherdess" made in the XIXth century is a long time dying; the last time I saw her she was in a small provincial museum, in a case labelled "Staffordshire Figurines." The attitude of mind was clear enough: all these things are trivialities, quite unworthy of serious study. This may be accounted for by the fact that it is indeed difficult, if not impossible, for the general public to study Meissen porcelain at all outside London. There are no circulating exhibitions of ceramics to compare with those of pictures, and in histories of art porcelain and pottery are habitually mentioned in the last sentence of the chapter on "minor arts," while, apart from Hannover, I only know of four books in English on German porcelain with any claim to authority; two of them are translations, and two are by W. B. Honey. Cecil Higgins has done much to remedy this state of affairs by including more than a hundred pieces of Meissen porcelain in his collection, and ensuring by the terms of his will that, contrary to much modern museum practice, they remain permanently displayed. By far the most important section of the whole collection is the group of over forty figures by J. J. Kaendler, but the Meissen "useful wares" cover a sufficiently wide range to enable anybody to form a fair idea of the factory's typical products.

## USEFUL WARES

Beginning with an unmarked Böttger red stoneware teapot, like that with the de Milde mark shown in *Hannover*, Vol. III, Fig. 59 (right), apparently cast by Böttger from an actual de Milde teapot, the collection includes two square bottle-shaped vases of Böttger's white porcelain, after silver models, with small applied reliefs after Peter Flötner, the XVIIth century Nürnberg designer. There follows a small group of pieces with gilding, of which the earliest is a cup and saucer of about 1715, decorated with birds, flowers, and a hare-hunting scene in relief gilding in the style associated with Christopher Konrad Hunger, Böttger's absconding gilder (cf. Honey: *Dresden China*, pl. VIIa). With the next few pieces the question of dating becomes rather complex, since the porcelain is of about 1725, while the gilt "chinoiseries" are probably of about



Fig. II. Travelling set in original case. Decoration in colours and gilding. Lustre marks. About 1720-25. No. 548.



Fig. I. Teapot with gilt decoration. Unmarked. Height, 3½ in. The porcelain about 1725; decoration about 1730-35. No. 542.

1730-35, and are in the Augsburg manner. The most delicate of these is a little teapot (Fig. I) with the cover attached to the handle and spout by a metal chain, with gilt decoration of a forest scene in the style of the Seuter workshop. Other examples are a spoon-tray, and a tall double-handled cup and saucer, both with fluting. Closely associated with these is a travelling set (Fig. II) in its original case. The silver spoon bears the hall-mark of an Augsburg silversmith, Phillip Jakob Jaeger, working in the early XVIIIth century, and the set may be dated about 1720-25. The bowl and cups are decorated with floral and leaf design moulded in relief and painted in colours, and with gilt chinoiseries, the saucers and stand with gilding alone. These pieces are also interesting as bearing the curious "lustre" marks discussed by Honey (*Dresden China*: pp. 54 and 161-2), and thought to be some kind of warehouse mark put on in ink and lightly fired; the bowl and stand have a cross beneath their bases, and the two saucers and one cup a "C" akin to one of the marks illustrated by Honey (No. 11, p. 162); the other cup is unmarked.

Mention must certainly be made of the well-known coffeepot painted with Watteau scenes in black and flesh tints within elaborate gilt borders. This also has a "lustre" mark "F.G." on the base, and once again the porcelain is earlier than the painting, the former being about 1725, and the latter about 1730-35. One side of it is illustrated in Honey's *German Porcelain* (pl. 21), and the other (in colours) in his *European Ceramic Art* (col. pl. XIII).

Before leaving the subject of gilding it will be as well to notice a teapot which justifies everything derogatory ever said about Baroque (Fig. III).

Certainly the most attractive of the "useful wares" are those painted with the charming chinoiserie scenes in colours. The finest of them is a teapot probably painted by J. G. Herold (Fig. IV). This is a most pleasing example of the delicate art of porcelain painting. The scene shown in the illustration is superbly composed to fit the curved conical surface; the slight curving of the tree, and the placing of its foliage and the flying birds, together with the grouping of the figures in a closely-knit design, leave bare a wide area of gleaming white porcelain of the highest Meissen technical excellence. A similar skill in design is shown in the lid. Behind all this is a most sensitive creative mind; here is a masterpiece to challenge comparison with any of the visual arts, and to rescue porcelain from its neglected place among the trifles, the curious, and the amusing.

Also in the Herold manner is another teapot with a band of chinoiserie painting in colours between a double band of





Fig. III. Teapot with gilt decoration. Unmarked. Height, 6 in. About 1725. No. 547.

moulded flutes with gold and red decoration, and a rather flat octangular box and cover with silver-gilt mounts, probably a sucrier, with the "K.P.M." mark in blue on the base (about 1725). A pair of large plates, of about 1730-35, have attractive "chinoiserie" in colours in the centre, including scenes with smoke rising from an opium pipe and a brazier, while round the border, within elaborate gilt lace-work, are port scenes. A teapot, with harbour scenes in black within gilt panels, has been illustrated in Honey's *Dresden China* (pl. XXIIa), and so has the basin belonging to a helmet ewer in the collection, with "hausmaler" painting of mythological scenes (pl. XXXIIb). The painting on the latter is of a very different order from anything considered hitherto, being crude and



Fig. IV. Teapot decorated in colours and gilt. Height, 5 1/4 in. Mark: Crossed swords in underglaze blue on base, and "I.Z." in gold (almost erased) under cover and on base. About 1725-30. No. 554.

unattractive. Port scenes occur, too, on a snuff-box, of about 1740-50, with painting by Christian Friedrich Herold, the kinsman of Johann Gregor mentioned above; this has burnished gilding in the interior, like a circular sucrier and cover (about 1745-50), with a continuous landscape scene with horsemen, painted in colours round the bowl in the style of J. G. Heinze. On the base of the latter, in addition to the crossed swords in underglaze blue, is the initial "H" in gold, partially erased. While on the subject of interiors we must notice a beaker moulded with acanthus leaves outside round the base and painted in colours with port scenes, which has an interior decorated with the famous mother-of-pearl lustre.

Equally famous, too, were the Meissen coloured grounds, and there is in the collection a yellow-ground coffee-pot with river scenes in purple within reserve panels, of about 1745, and a chocolate-pot (Fig. V) with a lovely mauve ground decorated with Kakiemon-style quail pattern in reserve panels, and with scattered sprays of Kakiemon flowers. Also in pseudo-Kakiemon style are the painting of a tiger, insects, and birds on a teapot (of about 1735) with flowers and trees in relief and colours, an octagonal cup and saucer with the Johanneum mark incised on the base of both, and a miniature vase, 2 1/2 inches high, with the Tiger pattern, and the "K.H.C." mark in purple enamel on the base, over the underglaze blue crossed



Fig. V. Coffee-pot painted with yellow ground. Height, 8 1/4 in. Mark: Crossed swords in underglaze blue and "21" incised under the glaze on base. About 1725-30. No. 561.

Chocolate-pot painted with mauve ground. Height, 9 1/2 in. Mark: Crossed swords in underglaze blue on base. About 1745-50. No. 562.





Fig. VI. Figure of a Chinese Boy. By J. J. Kaendler. Unmarked. Height, 8½ in. About 1745. No. 581.

swords. I have dealt in some detail with the "useful" wares since these are the kind of pieces which one may hope to own. They may even be picked up on rare occasions at considerably less than their current market value. Indeed, at a country auction sale which I couldn't get to, someone acquired a Meissen teapot, teapoy, and (I believe) a cream-jug, with painting in reserve panels on the beautiful "sea-green" ground, together with a Berlin piece, for £11. I had seen these on the view day and thought them far beyond me. The teapot (or its double) was being offered a little later at the Antique Dealers' Fair for £45. But the best Meissen figures are beyond the reach of most, and we are all the more grateful to Cecil Higgins for making available so many fine examples.

#### FIGURES

When one comes to write about Meissen figures a kind of dumbness descends. One doesn't want to talk about them, but to look at them. In addition, although Honey lists and dates a very large number of them, his references are of necessity to the standard German works, all of which are now as expensive as some of the porcelain itself, when obtainable at all, and this makes the process of identification and dating rather difficult.

Beginning once again with the earliest example, there is a "Pagoda" figure in Böttger's porcelain, of about 1715, like that in Honey's *Dresden China* (pl. XIXc), but brilliantly coloured. Other Chinese figures are a seated Chinaman with a monkey (of about 1735), and a Chinese boy with a leaf hat (Fig. VI), mentioned in Honey (p. 205). This is the model which was copied at Chelsea, an example of which was seen recently in the Eckstein sale. A seated Turk with a Guitar, by Kaendler, and a Tinker ("Chaudronnier") carrying the tools of his trade, by Kaendler and Reinicke, from the famous "Cris de Paris" engraved by the Comte de Caylus after drawings by Bouchardon, are both of the middle 1740's. The latter was illustrated in an article by Lord Fisher in *APOLLO* of October, 1934, which gathers together a mass of information on Meissen figures. Another well-known Kaendler figure, this time from the Italian Comedy, is that of the Lawyer ("Avvocato"). But the most famous of the Italian Comedy figures are the Harlequins. The finest in the Cecil Higgins Collection is the group of the Harlequin Family (Fig. VII). Here again is a work of art in the front rank of porcelain sculpture, which makes one wonder why the name of Kaendler is not equally as well known as those of the masters of sculpture on a larger scale, particularly when a masterpiece of this kind could be housed in one's own home, unlike the works of sculpture which one has to travel far and wide to see in the churches and galleries of Europe.

Another outstanding Harlequin group is that of the Harlequin and Lady modelled by J. J. Kaendler in 1747, illustrated in Honey's *Dresden China* (pl. XLVIIa). This group shows delicate realistic detail with no loss of vitality, but is less satirical in content than many of Kaendler's groups. Typical of these satirical groups is the Lady and Gallant (Fig. VIII) with a dog in the foreground scratching himself. This is coloured almost solely in yellow and blue, and originally had silver decoration on the hem of the lady's dress and the borders of the man's coat; the silver is now either rubbed off or black with oxidation. The sharply-defined planes of the man's coat remind one of the modelling of that other European ceramic artist, Bustelli. There are numbers of other Harlequin figures, standing and seated, playing the bag-



Fig. VII. The Harlequin Family. By J. J. Kaendler. Unmarked. Height, 7½ in. About 1740. No. 588.



Fig. VIII. A Lady and Gallant. By J. J. Kaendler. Unmarked. Height, 10½ in. About 1740. No. 610.

pipes, holding a bird-cage, and so on, mainly of a quieter type, both in pose and in colouring.

A group of six fancy-dress Saxon silver-miners is especially interesting in that one of the figures is claimed with some justification to represent Augustus the Strong. He is certainly more elaborately dressed than the others, in addition to having the monogram "AR" in his hat. These figures are illustrated in numerous places, and that of Augustus the Strong is in Thorpe's translation of Schmidt, referred to below (Fig. 117), and in *Hannover* (Fig. 119).

Other figures demand our attention, notably the "Tyrolese Dancers" (often called the "Dutch Dancers"), of 1735, by Eberlein, a group which is truly three-dimensional, in that it is almost equally effective when viewed from any side. This illustrates the exuberance of Baroque vitality at its best. By contrast the figure of a Freemason (illustrated in Schmidt's *Porcelain as an Art and a Mirror of Fashion*, translated by W. A. Thorpe, Fig. 116) shows another aspect of Baroque—its dignity and nobility, and the strength of its colouring.

A group of the middle 1740's, of a Mother and her Children (Fig. IX) is rather more sentimental in the best sense, and seems to point forward to a later age. But there is no false sentimentality here; it is a serious and delightful work, far removed from the Petit Trianon ideas, and even further removed from the pretty-prettiness of a century later.

There are many other figures worthy of notice: the Bacchus Group, similar to that illustrated by Honey (*Dresden China*, pl. 50c); the pair of seated peasant musicians with bagpipes and hurdy-gurdy, copied at Chelsea; the "Provençal," or Drummer, copied at Höchst. But we have only space to refer to the animals, mainly modelled by Kaendler: the sheep, birds, dogs, a bull-baiting scene and, finest of all, the Jays (Fig. X). These magnificent birds are classics of porcelain sculpture with particularly fine colouring: body, head and wings are pale blue-green, backs and patches near beaks and eyes dull reddish-brown; lower halves of wings are dark brown, and their upper edges blue tending towards violet. The question of naturalism arises once again, and is answered, I feel, by Kaendler's use of the gleaming white porcelain of the pedestals, moulded as tree trunks, as a background for amusingly realistic details in colour, such as beetles and other insects. These are porcelain figures, not examples of taxidermy, and the white pedestals are necessary aesthetically.

Amongst other animals, some daring Rococo modelling is achieved in the long dishevelled hair of two impudent dogs. By contrast the sheep look extremely wooden and stupid: they are evidently intentionally caricatured.



Fig. IX. Group of a Mother and Children. Unmarked. Height, 9 in. About 1745. No. 604.

We are almost back to our starting point—from the Shepherdess to her sheep. It is a suitable point at which to conclude with a ready-made moral: that however great an artist, he cannot dictate to his successors how they will adapt and modify his work. But it does prompt the further question, that if we are to credit Kaendler's invention with the types of objects produced later at, say, Chelsea, must we also lay at his door the awful responsibility for the flocks of china fauna which subsequently roamed the drawing-rooms of Europe for a century and a half or more?

The references to Honey's *Dresden China* are to the first edition.

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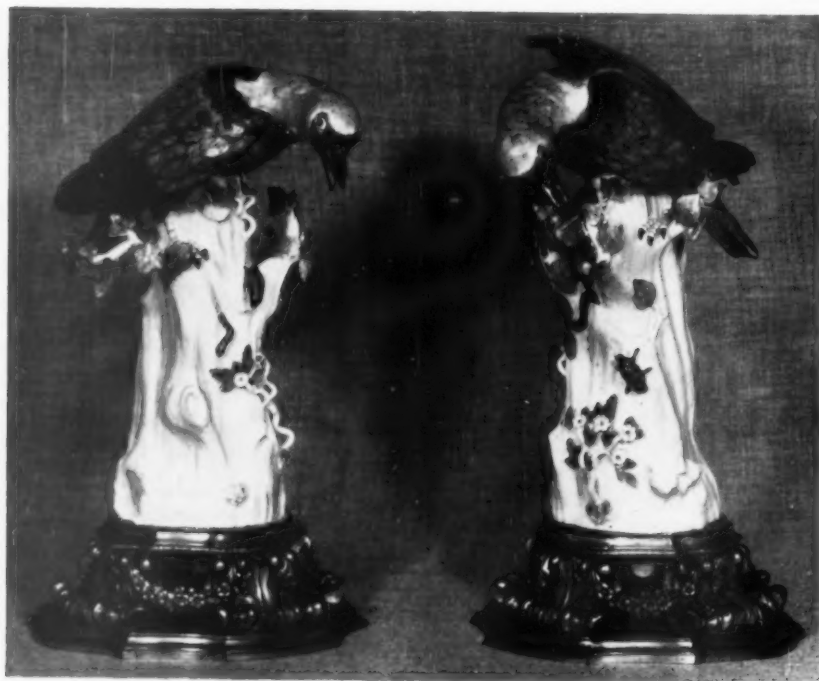


Fig. X. A Pair of Jays. By J. J. Kaendler. Unmarked. Heights, 15½ in. and 16½ in. About 1739. Nos. 630 and 630a.

## EXHIBITION OF PICTURES OF THE XVIIIth CENTURY AT DELFT, HOLLAND

THE Exhibition of English Pictures which opened on 26th November last at Delft will be a landmark in the history of English art, for it is the first time that any European country has asked this country to send them an exhibition of the Animal or Sporting School, not for their illustrative interest, but for their artistic value.

They were selected by director Dr. Weisenbeek of the Het Prinsenhof Museum of Delft during two journeys through England last summer, from Harwich to Liverpool and back via Windsor and Rockingham Castles.

This exhibition was to have been opened by H.R.H. Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, who takes a keen interest both in pictures and hunting, but he was prevented by a chill at the last minute and his place taken by the Minister of Education, supported by Sir Philip Nichols, our Ambassador, the Lord Mayor of Delft and a large gathering of art lovers. Dr. Weisenbeek is naturally far more interested in pictures than in English hunting and shooting, and has under his charge in the old palace of William the Silent a very exalted yard-stick, by which to measure any work of art, and the illustrative pictures in particular.

In his peregrinations through England, he visited the National Gallery, Tate, and Mr. Hutchinson's, but found nothing to tempt him; it was the private houses he particularly desired to draw on. Naturally, His Majesty's was not spared, nor Lord Spencer's, Col. Macdonald Buchanan's, Lord Bearsted's, Major Guy Paget's nor the Walker and the Usher Galleries of Liverpool and Lincoln. He managed to intercept four very fine H. Alkens on their way to that well-known collector, Mr. Hunneman, of Philadelphia. The learned doctor was not out for elephant or rhino, but the rarer fauna of great beauty and moderate size. Nor was a record bag his object, but just enough to decorate the walls of half a dozen rooms of his lovely old palace.

Thus he wandered on, seizing what he desired by force (of charm) from reluctant owners, whom he persuaded, that they liked it! Only three eluded him, two by fleeing the country and one going to ground under the Trustee Act!

Whatever one may think of his methods, no one can disagree with the result! "He sure got the best." There were only 82 items in the catalogue, including six classic books, *The Master of Game*, Edward 2nd Duke of York, 1405; *A General System of Horsemanship*, William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle (1st ed.); *The Gentleman's Recreation*, R. Bloom, 1710 (2nd ed.); *The Chase*, W. Somerville, 1796 (1st ed.); *Thoughts on Hunting*, Peter Beckford, 1781 (1st ed.); *The Anatomy of the Horse*, George Stubbs, 1766 (1st ed.); a really brilliant copy of *Notions*, 1829, and 12 other highly coloured prints in original boards by Henry Alken and "Mr. Facey's Romford Hounds" by the author of *Handley Cross*, 1865, bound from parts. But what a collection! They are not in some ugly case, but lying on oak or walnut tables, some older than themselves, just protected by a bit of glass.

Except for the Print Room, you have no sense of being in a museum, but rather of going round some nobleman's castle on the free day, for the only crowding is the sightseers. In each room there were no more than eight to ten oil paintings, hung over pieces of old Dutch furniture.

Among the loans, there were quite a lot of really small pictures from the Mountjoy Fane and Paget collections. These were arranged in patterns and were very effective either on the wall or, as in one case, lying in a show-table. One little group was composed of two Stubbs, two Ben Marshalls, a Morland, a Ferneley and a Hancock, all under 9 x 6: but what quality!

### THE OPENING

The opening may be said to have begun just after 3 p.m., when the Royal Drag Hunt arrived out of the fog in the Palace courtyard to the sound of all the church bells and plaudits of the multitude. They had ridden 22 miles cross-country from the other side of The Hague and certainly proved the old proverb, "More dirt, less hurt."

The hunters were sumptuously entertained by the Lord Mayor of Delft at a stand-up champagne lunch, except the unfortunate Major Paget, who had to hurry off to change after a fall at a ditch, and look respectable for his introductory speech!

After the Mayor's welcome, the Minister opened the exhibition with a few words on hunting; Dr. Weisenbeek then called on

Major Paget to speak about the history of this English school. His views are, of course, well known to all our readers. He pointed out how much English art owed to the Netherlands, from Cornelius Janson and Van Dyke to Jan Vyke, the Master of Wootton, and Peter Tillemans, his partner. He described the school as their illegitimate baby come home to roost, which caused great amusement.

Major Paget then went round the galleries, commenting on the individual pictures. Most of the audience understood and spoke excellent English.

The scope of the exhibition was from 1700 to 1860, with the exception of two modern, Linwood Palmer's "St. Simon" and Lionel Edward's, R.I., "Princess Elizabeth's First Hunt." Readers, when they hear the names of the artists and where they come from, will not need to be told how representative this exhibition is. Sixteen Alkens from Cottesbrook and Lincoln, a Barraud, a Nathaniel Dance, a very fine shooting group and "Charles Davis on Hermit," small 9 x 15 by R.B.D., from Ackermann. John and Claud Ferneleys (12) mostly from Wheler Lodge, including Claud's Meets at Kirby Gate and Bradgate Park, 1860; worth their place in any water-colour as is his father's "Jessie" in any Victorian portrait exhibition, so too is his "Ben Marshall," 18 x 13, from Cottesbrook. Another Ferneley was his sketch in oils (from the Leicester museum) for his big "The Quorn at Quenby." His Majesty's Sawrey Gilpin and Paul Sandby, shown with the Royal Pictures (Royal Academy, 1948) naturally collected a crowd. Col. Penn Lloyds contributed five of his Cooper Hendersons.

Leggatt's Van Hirp, 1614-1677, of Prince Rupert buying horses in a stable proved a great favourite and how far ahead the Dutchmen were of us at that time.

Lord Spencer had sent his Van Maes of Althorpe Park, 1692. Ben Marshall was not well represented owing to a slip up of a lender, but Morlands (8) on the other hand were in force, both in coloured mezzos from Baron Juyl of The Hague and in oils from Cottesbrook and Rockingham.

Old friends like Seymour's "Snap," Wootton's "Belvoir Hunt," "Lister Turk," Stubbs' "Eclipse" (2), Lorraine Smith's "Bagging the Fox," "Mr. Ralph Lambton of Undertaker, pattern Mr. Turner after J. Ward," "Sir R. Sutton and the Quorn Hounds" after Grant, P.R.A., were all there; so, too, were Lord Bearsted's "Essex Hunt" (4) and Major Paget's "Meet of the Harriers" by the Wolstenholmes. The Pollards and Sartorius came from the Walker Gallery, as did a fine George Towne.

What struck one above all was how absolutely at home all these pictures looked in the Het Prinsenhof. They might have been painted generation after generation for its princely owners. Never have pictures been better arranged and balanced. Not one clashed, nor was one killed.

"We had no idea there were such pictures."

"Why have we never seen anything like these before?"

"But how beautiful they are, they all live."

Even, "Are they for sale?"

There is no doubt the audience enjoyed them, especially, I think, the horse-portraits. I heard them compared to Cuyt and Paul Potter. One wished there had been more cattle pictures by Ward, Marshall and Ferneley or by some of our many Coopers!

If the first and second day are any guide, the director expects an almost record attendance in spite of the very adverse criticism of some of the "modern art" shows sponsored by the Art Council, not the National Exhibition Bureau under Mr. Charles Chisman, who organised the English end of this show.

Just to show what the Dutch thought of our "modern" sculpture: "A Family Group" was mistaken for a fine cluster of groundnuts, shown as a joke.

I expect the owners of sporting pictures will have a bad time for a bit, as the Opening was put on the European air by the B.B.C. as well as in the Holland "Home News."

There may not have been any Constable's "Mill," nor Stubbs' "Hambletonians," nor the finished "Quorn of Quenby" with 39 or 40 half life-size portraits, nor a lot of the big "Charnwood Forest" Morlands, but, by and large, it was a good cross-section of its period. There was not one picture which I should not have liked to take home or one that was not good of its kind, though of course not all were masterpieces.

I hear we will be able to see them in London in February at that delightful suburban gallery in Whitechapel.



# The History of French Panoramic Wallpapers

BY ALEXANDER WATT

PAPER constitutes one of the major necessities of life. Paper has done much to advance, and to retard, civilisation. In its primary use as newsprint, paper has been instrumental in influencing mankind to start revolutions and make wars. Fortunately, it has also contributed to peace, learning, and cultural relationship between the races of the world.

It can hardly be said that we are to-day living in the true age of paper. For paper is now employed largely as a means of publishing and exposing one man's, or one country's, controversy and criticism against another.

Paper had its real use in the late XVIIIth and early XIXth centuries when panoramic wallpapers came into fashion. Then there was no scarcity of tough, pure paper that was intended to last, and is still lasting. Paper, too, which was destined to entertain and educate the public.

With so much of this fine quality paper available an industry was started, about the year 1800, for making wallpapers on an ambitious scale. These panoramic wallpapers—as they were called—were the outcome of a discovery made by a Scot, named Robert Barker, who, in 1787, conceived a manner of painting a circular composition in such a way that the subject matter made a logical termination at the point where the theme had commenced. In this fashion, the extended panoramic wallpaper differed from the earlier panels wherein isolated subjects were framed in architectural settings.

Printed panoramas were composed of strips of paper, varying from twelve to thirty strips per panorama, which could be glued to the walls of a room in such a way that the subject

unfolded itself in the form of a romantic story, or an historical document, or merely as a descriptive composition. In point of



Detail from "The Gardens of Bagatelle" panoramic wallpaper.



One of the panels of the panoramic wallpaper entitled "The Hunt at Compiègne."



## THE HISTORY OF FRENCH PANORAMIC WALLPAPERS



"The Bay of New York" wallpaper from the series "Scenic America."

fact, they have never been anything else than a charming art of imitation, retaining, nevertheless, a specific character of their own on account of their involved process of manufacture and their texture, as well as their entertaining quality.

The artists employed by the printers to sketch the cartoons of these panoramas deliberately avoided making compositions in the classic sense of the word. Instead, they produced designs which, when placed in the dining-room, for example, were destined to entertain the guests at table. The gay, abandoned periods of the Consulate and the First Empire were admirably suited to what historians have termed "decorative divertissements." As such, panoramic wallpapers were intended to serve as decorations and not to be scrutinised and criticised as paintings. They were, in the strict sense of the word, panoramas; panoramas which were meant to catch the eye and capture the imagination by reason of their very subject matter as, for instance, in those entitled "The Travels of Captain Cook," "The Story of Paul and Virginia," "Views of India."

Designing these panoramic wallpapers was a complicated task, for it was necessary to treat the subject in such a manner that the story could be described in sections, much as the chapters in a fairy tale. Thus, according to the dimensions of a room, a panorama would be made up of composite panels which should be shown in sections or else extended in logical sequence along the walls. If one had the required space then one could exhibit the complete and uninterrupted story of "The Travels of Captain Cook." If not, then one was still enabled to decorate the room with certain separate episodes in the adventures of Captain Cook.

The golden era of panoramic wallpapers in France lasted from 1800 to 1835. The first recorded wallpaper—"The Gardens of Bagatelle"—is generally claimed to be a product of the year 1798. This was originally produced by Arthur and Granard and is composed of twelve strips, which are usually disposed round the room in three individual panels. The dresses worn by the figures in these compositions are pure Directorate, while the groups recall the work of Debucourt who, at that time, executed a series of colour engravings illustrating the mode and manner of the period. The "Gardens of Bagatelle" are printed in a simple harmony of green and brown monochrome on a limpid blue, yellow and white background. In comparison, the "Garden of Eden" wallpaper, printed sixty years later, is made up of no less than 1,099 different shades of colour!

The year 1860, when the "Garden of Eden" wallpaper was produced, marked the end of the process of printing panoramas by hand. With the introduction of the printer's rolling machine, the industry became a lost art for its very quality depended on the

qualitative handicraft of innumerable engravers and printers specially trained for the purpose. And so the laborious technique by hand was finally replaced by an ingenious mechanism which resulted, as always, in the production losing its essential quality and becoming decadent. Despite the record number of three thousand six hundred and forty-two plates used in the printing of the "Garden of Eden,"



Detail from "The Travels of Captain Cook" showing the death scene of Captain Cook with the frigates *Discovery* and *Resolution* in the background.



A corner of one of the living-rooms in Monsieur Carlhian's Paris home showing the panoramic wallpaper *in situ*. "The Royal Fête in the Champs-Élysées." The furniture is Louis XVI, commode in mahogany, bearing the stamp of Leleu, and chairs and a gilded bronze clock.

it cannot compare with the graceful and charming wallpaper known as "The French Gardens."

It seems almost certain that panoramic wallpapers were invented to serve as an alternative form of decoration to replace the costly (and dusty) tapestries of the XVIIIth century. Incidentally, the hunting scenes in the "Hunt at Compiègne" (believed to have been designed by Vernet) recall similar compositions by Oudry for the "Hunts of Louis XV" which were woven at the Beauvais manufactory.

Many, however, preferred to own the paper panoramas, as not only did they cost less but they were easier to transport if one moved house. Generally speaking, all it required was to place buckets of steaming water in the room and have the strips of paper unglue themselves from the walls. After being carefully dried, they could then be rolled up, placed in cylindrical tins, sealed, and transported at will. Curiously enough, this recalls a somewhat similar method employed, about three hundred and fifty years previously, by Louis XI who commissioned Bourdichon to paint a series of scrolls which he could take with him on his travels and unfold as decorations on the walls of his various palaces.

On account of the comparative facility of removing and transporting these panoramic wallpapers, a considerable number of them were sent abroad in the early XIXth century. It so happens that there exist more French panoramic wallpapers in America than there are in France. Miss Nancy McClelland—who has written the only authoritative work on the subject in the English language—claimed, in 1934, to have traced two hundred different panoramic wallpapers in the United States, whereas Monsieur Carlhian, the French collector and expert, has succeeded in identifying about one hundred and twenty-five in France.

The close ties that united America and France during the War of Independence undoubtedly explain the presence of so many panoramic wallpapers in the homes of the United States, particularly in the seaport towns of New England where these papers came into fashion as early as 1815. La Fayette must have contributed a great deal to the popularity of French panoramic wallpapers among the Americans of his time. Thus, in 1834, the French manufacturers printed a series of wallpapers entitled "Scenic America," comprising

views of the Bay of New York, West Point, Niagara Falls, Boston Harbour, etc.

Monsieur Dufour, in Paris, and Monsieur Zuber, in Alsace, were the two leading printers in France of panoramic wallpapers. The latter was responsible for the manufacture of these American panoramas, as well as numerous other well-known examples such as "The French Gardens" and "Views of Switzerland." But it was Monsieur Dufour who monopolised the industry during the first half of the XIXth century. He began his career by making drapery wallpapers in imitation of silk and velvet hangings. His first panoramic wallpaper—printed in 1804-1805—and which is still the most popular of all, was named "The Savages of the Pacific." This later became known as "The Travels of Captain Cook."

At least four sets of this colourful and entertaining wallpaper went to America. One set, however, had three or four of its strips destroyed by the owner, an old maid who apparently considered some of the scenes as improper! It is difficult to conceive how she should have thought so as the artist responsible for the designs, Jean Gabriel Charvet, exercised his scanty imagination by dressing up these savages of the South Seas in costumes of the Directorate period! A glance at any one of the panels of this wallpaper is sufficient to indicate that the Protestant missionaries must have visited these islands and left the trace of their preachings.

An example of the licence that Monsieur Charvet permitted himself in sketching the sectional cartoons for this panorama may be found in the strips which show the death of Captain Cook. The scene is laid in the Island of Owhyhee. The two frigates, *The Resolution* and *The Discovery*, lie at anchor in the bay of Karakakooa. But the volcano, in the background, has been borrowed from one of the New Hebrides Islands situated at a distance of many hundreds of miles from the scene of Captain Cook's death!

Not all panoramic wallpapers indulged in such fantasy and flights of imagination as that which describes the travels of Captain Cook. The most important period panorama is that printed, in 1815, at the beginning of the Restoration. This is entitled "The Royal Fête in the Champs-Élysées" and is more or less authentic in its historical and architectural detail. The main panel shows

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the river Seine where a water-tournament is taking place. The buildings on the far bank are the Hotels Massena and Palais-Bourbon. Another interesting historical feature is the balloon floating above the rose-tinted clouds. In it is seated Marie Madeleine Sophie Armant, wife of Francois Blanchard, the well-known aeronaut of the time. Together they made several sensational balloon expeditions. Her last was in July, 1819, just four years after her appearance over the Champs-Élysées during the Fête du Roi, when she gaily lit fireworks in the basket of her dirigible, while sailing over Paris. Unfortunately, one of them set fire to the balloon and she crashed and was killed in the vicinity of the Opera House.

Boilly is thought to have been the author of this wallpaper as a picture exhibited by him, in 1823, reproduces exactly the same scene as that which appears in the adjacent panel. Here we see the distribution of wine and bread to the people of Paris in the Tuileries Gardens, on the occasion of the birthday of Louis XVIII. Another detail of this charming wallpaper shows the crowd watching an open-air theatrical performance in the Champs-Élysées. Those interested in period costumes will be attracted by the various forms of attire typical of the Restoration, ranging from the coquettish dresses worn by the Elegantes to the resplendent military uniforms.

The idea that gave birth to the invention of panoramic wall-papers was both original and ingenious. It belonged to an age far removed from the chaotic world of to-day. Then was the time when the greatest speed conceived by man was that of a galloping horse and when one had the leisure to study these panoramas which, as described by the printers of the period, constituted "a call to adventure."

The historical and utopian aspect of the panoramic wallpapers of the Directorate and the Restoration can still be enjoyed by those who are endowed with a fertile and romantic imagination.

In this present world of jet propulsion and supersonic speed, it is a delight to watch the hazardous ascent of Madame Blanchard in her balloon (in the "Royal Fête in the Champs-Élysées") or the breakneck speed of the four-in-hand in the foreground of the Bay of New York (from "Scenic America").

### COVER PLATE

The English topographical water-colour, which yielded such a magnificent harvest of fine work in the XVIIIth and early XIXth century, had some remarkable exponents even past the middle of the century when spectacular oil painting tended to overshadow the more delicate medium. One of the men who suffered in this eclipse was John Dobbin. We know all too little of this artist. He exhibited at the Royal Academy regularly from 1842 until 1875. His early pictures are usually landscapes of Scotland or of Northern England, particularly of Yorkshire, though his home during these years was in London. Later we have paintings of Continental places, of Antwerp and variously in France; but from about 1856 to 1870 he was in Spain and devoted himself to the landscape and town views there.

The view of "Greenwich Hospital from the Royal Observatory," painted in 1851, is a *tour de force* of this topographical art. Its sheer size—30½ x 52½ inches—betokens an ambitious work. Its style and technical qualities justify a high claim for Dobbin among Victorian artists. The trees and deer and scattered groups of people in the foreground, the Observatory buildings on the left, are perfectly observed and rendered in careful detail. Beyond the park one's eye is focussed on the exquisitely painted architecture of the Hospital, seen over the roof of the Queen's House and the colonnade; and beyond again is the aerial view of the winding river with its shipping and London, with the dome of St. Paul's dominating the city. No more difficult subject could be chosen by any artist, and Dobbin has succeeded in welding the many elements into a landscape of classical beauty fitting the theme.

The picture is at present in the possession of Frank Sabin, Esq., of Park House, Rutland Gate. Friends and lovers of the National Maritime Museum will feel that it might well grace the recently re-opened Queen's House which it so finely depicts.



Portrait of Charles Conder by Toulouse-Lautrec. Gouache on cardboard, 18½ ins. by 14 ins. The Aberdeen Art Gallery.

THE Aberdeen Art Gallery has recently acquired the portrait, reproduced above, of Charles Conder by Toulouse-Lautrec, which is not included in Joyant's lists of works by the artist<sup>1</sup> nor recorded elsewhere to my knowledge. The portrait represents Conder facing three-quarters left, in evening dress to the waist, his lank blond hair uncovered. In the lower left is the signature and dedication: "Ch Conder T—Lautrec 93."

Conder appears in several of Lautrec's pictures. His retreating figure in outdoor clothes appears in "Jeanne Avril sortant du Moulin Rouge," in 1892, reproduced in Joyant<sup>2</sup>; in "Au Moulin Rouge: les deux valseuses," 1892, in the Cesky Ador Moderni Galerie at Prague represented in Rothenstein<sup>3</sup> where he is seated in morning clothes and a black homburg hat; in "Aux Ambassadeurs: Gens chics," 1893, the painting in the Bernheim Collection, reproduced Joyant,<sup>4</sup> and in *Le Figaro Illustré* of July, 1893, number 4 "Le Plaisirs à Paris. Les Restaurants et les cafés-concerts des Champs Élysées by Gustave Geffroy," where he is seated opposite a lady in evening dress with a silhouette of Yvette Guilbert on the open-air stage in the background; in the Programme for "Le Missionnaire," known as "La Loge au Mascaron Dore," lithograph, 1893, and in "Conquete de passage," 1896, Musée des Augustins, Toulouse, in which the artist in evening dress with opera hat is seated beside an actress at her dressing table, sometimes called "Femme mettant son corset"<sup>5</sup> and in a lithograph of the same subject.<sup>6</sup>

The Assistant Librarian of the Courtauld Institute, to whom my thanks are due, has informed me that there is a portrait drawing in profile in the Museum at Albi, dated 1893, but I have not been able to obtain a photograph of this for inspection.

I have not seen all the above pictures but it seems certain that the portrait now at Aberdeen was the sketch for the painting of 1893, "Aux Ambassadeurs: Gens chics." The pose and details of the costume are the same; the only difference is the expression of the eyes and mouth.

The portrait now referred to was in the possession of Mrs. E. G. Robichaud, of Dornoch, Sutherlandshire, whose first husband was Llewellyn Hacon, the partner of Ricketts in the Vale Press, to whom the portrait was given by Conder. The artist frequently stayed with the Hacons, who kept a room for him at the Vale, the lease of which they took over from Ricketts, and also entertained him at Dieppe and Dornoch. Whilst at Dornoch, Conder painted views of the beach, one of them with Mrs. Hacon seated sketching, and these also have been acquired by the Aberdeen Gallery. During this visit in July and August, 1896, he painted his first fan to be reproduced. The friendship between Conder and the Hacons has been described by Rothenstein.<sup>7</sup>

CHARLES CARTER.

(See foot of previous column for footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Joyant, "H. de Toulouse Lautrec, Peintre." H. Floury, Paris, 1926.

<sup>2</sup> Joyant, "H. de Toulouse Lautrec, Dessins, Estampes, Affiches," 1926.

<sup>3</sup> Joyant, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>4</sup> Rothenstein, John, "The Life and Death of Conder, London, 1938," p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Joyant, *op. cit.*, p. 124. Catalogue entry, p. 278.

<sup>6</sup> Joyant, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

<sup>7</sup> Delteil, No. 188, *Le Peintre-graveur illustre* T. X. XI.

<sup>8</sup> Rothenstein, John, *op. cit.*, pp. 141, 142, 145, 146.



# THE MATTHEW BOULTON PATTERN BOOKS

## PART I

BY W. A. SEABY AND R. J. HETHERINGTON

THE firm of Matthew Boulton and John Fothergill, of the Soho, Birmingham, has long been famous for its artistic metal and stone wares produced in the latter half of the XVIIIth century. Except for the hall-marked silver, the dating and, indeed, the identity of many pieces, considered to be from Boulton's workshops, have been matters of conjecture; a maker's mark was used rarely on the earlier Sheffield plate, and never on ormolu. This uncertainty is to a large extent removed by a recently discovered source.



Fig. I. Vol. I, p. 111. A group of Adam soup tureens including a very large one supported by dolphins and made for the Admiralty in 1781.

Boulton cut steel work was acquired by the Reference Library in 1896 (see below).

The designs are numbered consecutively in several sequences, the first ending at 3095 in 1832; the second prefixed by Z extending from 1799 to 1844; a third series prefixed by A and undated; two other short series have five or six digits which might be connected with Order book numbers. The second and later series begin as large scale and probably working drawings of the first series.

The writers have numbered the volumes I to VII according to date. Volume I, comprising a hundred and one double-faced linen sheets, contains over 1,500 manuscript and printed patterns, nearly all cut from the original sheets arranged according to nature of the object. Unfortunately in the majority of cases the outline of the object has been followed so closely that the number which would enable one to place the piece in its chronological sequence has been cut away. Between a quarter and a third of the numbers remain, however, and two bear dates, No. 1521, dated 1787, and

an unnumbered item, a soup tureen made for the Admiralty in 1781 (Fig. I).

The numbers found in this first volume begin with an unpretentious two-quart copper saucepan (No. 1) and reach No. 1807, a silver teapot. From this range of numbers it would appear that 280 designs are missing, since only 1527 designs can be accounted for in this volume or as oddments in the other volumes.

In 1940 Messrs. Elkington and Co., Silversmiths and Electro-platers of Newhall Street, Birmingham, deposited at the City of Birmingham Central Library a series of large volumes containing several thousand designs for plate and *objets d'art* in stone and ormolu.

A label, dated 1906, pasted into the cover of each volume, states that there were originally nine books and some loose sheets, that all the designs in one book were cut out and pasted into one of the other volumes and that originally all had been on loose sheets. These patterns were purchased by William Ryland (then Works Manager of Elkington and Co.) on behalf of the firm at the sale (1850) of the effects of the Boulton and Watt factory at Soho. Mr. Ryland refused to buy the accompanying dies, saying that they were useless to anyone without the books, which were all that he required.

To-day, seven folios measuring between 15½ ins. by 10 ins. and 30 ins. by 20½ ins. in heavy guard bindings preserve almost the whole range of patterns produced at the Soho Works between 1762 and 1844. An eighth volume of



Fig. II. Vol. I, p. 156. A whole page of designs from the first pattern book, Nos. 234-242, including an Adam silver urn, a gill measure and an elaborate vase candelabrum in Blue John and ormolu.

Vol. II contains numbered designs in rough order from No. 1809 to 2736. No. 2006 is dated 1795 and from here on many are dated. For the most part the patterns are those of silver and Sheffield plate in late classical style. The last dated item, No. 2733, is of 1813, four years after the death of Matthew Boulton.

Vol. III continues the numbers in Vol. II from 2738 to 3095 and can be dated from 1814 to 1832. Except that the designs show the more florid forms of the Bacchanalian style, introduced by Paul Storr and other silversmiths in the Regency period, the method of drawing resembles that in Vol. II.

The remaining four volumes consist mostly of the Z series, Vol. V being a complete miscellany of variously numbered designs, including full-scale drawings for several important pieces of dinner plate and a whole page from the original pattern book with designs numbered 514-529. One pattern in Vol. IV is inscribed "Z 26—full-size—made for P & A & B & sent 'em Dec. 18. 1802." It



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corresponds to No. 2397 in Vol. II, a small scale design, and from this we deduce that the Z series consist of full-scale working designs of the main series made as occasion arose.

In addition to the seven pattern books described, the Birmingham Reference Library possesses one of the cut steel pattern books of Matthew Boulton. This volume, which for convenience we will call Vol. B, is of folio size and was bought on 3rd Feb., 1896, by Mr. Samuel Timmins and given to Mr. George Tangye, by whom it was presented to the Library.

This volume starts at No. 2227, a button, and finishes at No. 3696, also a button. There are therefore some 1470 designs of cut steel

indication that the designs are arranged only roughly in chronological sequence. The second that the designs are drawn on a page of the same water-marked paper and of the same size as the few complete sheets found in the volumes I and V of the fine wares pattern books. Thirdly, it happens that numbers 986-999 are missing from the main sequence of numbering. If therefore we may assume that until about 1782, the date at which the subsidiary firm, Matthew Boulton and Button Co., was founded, cut steel designs and *objets* were in one sequence, the difference in the number of patterns extant (1527) and the range of numbers (1-1807) would largely be accounted for, since we may also assume that



Fig. III. Vol. I, p. 171. A group of stone and metal urns, candle and essence vases, including a horizontal clock (No. 4), with the figure of Venus weeping at the tomb of Adonis.

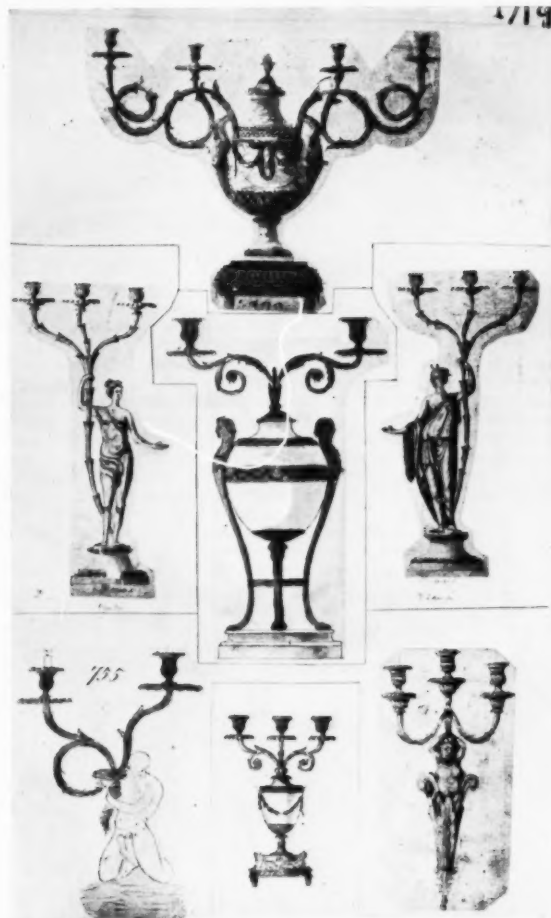


Fig. IV. Vol. I, p. 19. Group of candelabra, including No. 399, the original design for the pair made for Queen Charlotte to the order of George III, 1767. (See Fig. V.)

buttons, buckles, chatelaines, watch guards, sword hilts, chapes, guards and scabbard-mounts, the forms of which admirably show the elaborate faceting but highly conventional fashions adopted in dress ornament in the late XVIIIth and early XIXth centuries. None of these examples is dated but the high numbering indicates that this volume belongs at the earliest to the later period of Boulton's life. Support is given to this reckoning by the inclusion, loose in the pages, of a sheet of drawings of sword hilts, etc., from an earlier book having the numbers 986 to 999. These are priced and three are dated, viz.: 990 (14 April, 1775), 991 (5 March, 1775) and 992 (4 March, 1775).

Some interesting points arise from this loose sheet. One is an

whoever was responsible for cutting out the designs from the original volumes discarded all the cut steel work. Volume B would therefore be a second or third volume of a parallel sequence to the main wares dealing only with cut steel work and dating from the early years of the XIXth century.

A most interesting article by Mr. J. D. Aylward in *APOLLO*, Vol. L, No. 297, pp. 130-1 (November, 1949), on a sword mounted by Thomas Langford having a cut steel hilt by Boulton, c. 1770-80, bears out our remarks as to the value for identification and dating of the Boulton pattern books. Mr. Aylward has, however, been misinformed about how the cut steel pattern book was acquired by the City of Birmingham and also about the sequence of the



Fig. V. Garniture of Blue John and ormolu pieces by Matthew Boulton for Queen Charlotte's drawing-room at Buckingham House, now at Windsor Castle. By gracious permission of His Majesty the King.

numbering, since he has missed the point that the loose sheet is part of an earlier book. Although this sword hilt does not tally with any of the sword hilts in Volume B, Mr. Aylward is convinced that the work is Boulton's on account of the style and since *motifs* of the pommel, grip and guard agree with those from certain of the drawings in the existing pattern book.

Volume I is by far the most interesting one of the eight in spite of the mutilated form in which it has come down to us. The description and notes which follow are almost entirely based on our findings of the contents in this volume. Volumes II and III

will have their value in dating exactly the Sheffield plate of Matthew Boulton and Plate Co. (1781-1809), of M. R. Boulton (1809-34) and of Soho Plate Co. (1834-43).

The designs in the first pattern book reveal a wealth of information about Boulton's early productions in silver, Sheffield plate, ormolu and decorative stonework. From the number of printed designs scattered through the pages, of which not a few are numbered in ink in the same sequence as the ink and wash sketches, we learn that Boulton, like many of his contemporaries, was not averse to using other manufacturers' illustrations for his own productions.

These small printed patterns are all of plate and might easily have been taken from an early Sheffield plate catalogue; but none attributable to Boulton exists, so far as the writers are aware. Another series of larger plates, of which there are 52 patterns out of a total numbered up to 298, are pages from the printed catalogue of "T. and L." Designs consist of pillar candlesticks, Adam tureens, chocolate and coffee jugs, dishes, tea urns and smaller utensils. It is noticeable that the printed numbers against the illustrations do not fit into the Boulton sequence and that no ink numbers have been inserted to replace them. But for the rest the designs are all of ink or pencil, with or without wash, some little more than thumb-nail sketches and others carried out with considerable care and detail. The range of *objets* is enormous, from the humblest gill measure (No. 239) (Fig. II) to the elaborate pair of *radix amethysti* (Blue John) and ormolu candelabra, each with four branches, similar to those made for Queen Charlotte at Buckingham House about 1767 (No. 399) (Figs. IV and V).

Already a number of designs has been identified with extant pieces in public and private collections or with descriptions in contemporary letters and catalogues, so that a rough sequence of the forms can be built up and a skeleton chronology established. Many more pieces can be fairly closely dated on stylistic grounds alone, while there is reason to believe that further research into the technique of the drawings, as well as examination of the date of introduction of certain classes of wares or ornaments, may bring about a still closer classification.

An example of how pieces can be identified as Boulton's work with reasonable certainty may be seen by comparing the pair of fine Blue John ewers, decorated in ormolu with having Pan masks on the shoulders (Fig. VI), with a design similar in most details on page 83 of Volume I of the pattern books.<sup>1</sup> These vessels appear to date from about 1770 and, together with a pair of fine vase candelabra,<sup>2</sup> probably formed a chimney-piece garniture for an Adam period room.

(To be continued)



Fig. VI. Pair of Blue John ewers mounted in ormolu with Pan masks, now at Birmingham City Museum.

<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> Illustrated in the March issue of "Apollo" (Part II).

## Continental Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum

**S**HORTLY before Christmas, two further sections of the newly arranged collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum were opened to the public, those described as Continental Art (1570-1700) and Islamic Art. I shall only review the first section in this note. Actually the title chosen is not a very happy one. What is in fact exhibited is a series of objects illustrating various manifestations of the art styles generally known as Mannerist and Baroque. It is, however, notoriously difficult to lay down precise commencing and concluding dates for any single style in art, for the good reason that a new development usually starts in a fairly circumscribed region and then gradually diffuses its influence over an ever-widening area. The process may take many decades and an object of provincial origin may copy a much earlier piece made in a great metropolis. In announcing that the new galleries cover the period given, the Museum authorities have implied that all the objects shown can be attributed to a date within the period. When, however, one comes to look at the individual labels, one is relieved to find that they have not endeavoured to stick to the rules at all. There are in fact many pieces which are described as "middle to late XVIth century," "mid-XVIIth century" and even "early XVIIIth century." This is of course entirely as it should be, for, while ignoring the dates where necessary, they have taken care to preserve a consistency of style throughout. I suppose that the more convenient designations of "Mannerist" and "Baroque" have been avoided, because it was felt that the general public would not understand their significance. This may well be true, and I hesitate to think of the fantastic interpretations of the problematic terms which might be provided by those so obligingly and misleadingly informative uniformed attendants in the galleries, who are always so ready to assist the ignorant stranger.

On the other hand, I doubt whether the date 1570 suggests any very vital moment in the history of art even to the art historian, so that no one is likely to be enlightened by the present appellation. The two sections of the Museum that have already been opened in their new arrangement, namely, the Romanesque and Gothic galleries, have introduced us to the austere atmosphere of the cathedral, church, private chapel, or, at best, the monastic refectory. In the newly opened galleries, we find ourselves in the more grandiose, and, I think, more sympathetic surroundings of the state rooms of some magnificent castle. Without more ado, I must say that it has been done very well indeed, and the usual Museum spectacle of serried ranks of cases containing serried rows of objects is conspicuous by its absence. In the earlier galleries where ecclesiastical objects predominated, it was clearly impossible to create so attractive an atmosphere, but with tapestries on the walls, with fine pieces of furniture placed at appropriate points, with carpets on the floors and bronzes and majolica vessels set out on tables, a very attractive effect has been achieved.

The newly opened galleries will probably attract more interest amongst the collecting public, since they include many objects of a class that may still be acquired by the discriminating collector. I am not suggesting that XVIth century furniture, bronzes by Adrian de Vries, or marble busts by Bernini are likely to come the way of the collector, but there are pieces of majolica and of delft, silver vessels and clocks on view which are no finer than those still to be found in the London art market. Incidentally, the new division of the Museum collections into "Primary" and "Reserve" collections may well mislead some of those who visit the Museum. The selection shown in the primary galleries is only a very small one, and the fact that an object is displayed upstairs in the reserve galleries does not necessarily mean that it is in any way inferior to similar ones in the primary collection. As far as one can determine, aesthetic considerations have always predominated in the arrangement of the rooms, so that it is possible to enjoy them as a unity. There has, however, been a rather half-hearted attempt at chronological progression, an attempt which has frequently had to be sacrificed to considerations of effect.

It was not till the latter part of the XVIIth century that any real sense of comfort in the furnishing of a room was developed. Thus the earlier chairs that are exhibited are of a semi-state character, and only those of the second half of the century look anything like what we consider a chair should be. It is interesting to notice in these galleries how slowly it was that furniture adapted itself to considerations of utility. I feel that the main function of the French XVIth century furniture was to give the designer and

the maker the opportunity to display their mastery of the ungainly fantasies of form of Mannerist art. The trouble was that wood offered a material that could be too easily worked, and so we find design running away with form just as wildly as technique ran away with form in the case of much of the Venetian glass of the XVIIth century. The manifestations of excessive technical skill in this latter material may be seen in a case in the same gallery. That the main emphasis should be on splendour rather than on utility is only what one would expect of a gallery of Baroque art. One associates not only splendour of ornament with Baroque art but also grandeur of scale. Indeed it may well be that the Museum authorities have avoided the term, not because of any scepticism as to the general knowledge of the British public, but simply because it was felt that no gallery which did not present vast Baroque façades loaded with mouldings but triumphant with their crowns of vociferous plastic detail, over-life-size monumental statuary and soaring staircases leading up to solemn entrances flanked by colossal orders, could possibly aspire to the term. I do not know, though I suppose I might easily have obtained an official answer, for the gallery was provided on press day not only with labels, but even a senior official to deal with just such matters. However, I preferred to speculate, recalling another exhibition held in the same Museum since the war, called, I think, "Style in Sculpture," in which the interesting experiment was made of producing over-life-size photographic reproductions of some of the smaller pieces of Baroque sculpture, in order to see how far the monumental conception of the XVIIth century sculptors was preserved when they were working on quite a small scale. The result was that the objects in question stood up extremely well to this difficult test and I think that an expert who was unfamiliar with the object, on being confronted with two photographs, one actual size and one an enlargement, would have found it very difficult to state which photograph represented the actual dimensions of the statue.

Looking through the galleries, the only homely note was struck by the Flemish tapestries, some of which, with their attractive little subjects of hunting and rustic pursuits, distinctly lacked the grand manner. On the other hand, the Venetian glass, the Italian faience, the south-German silver, the Italian lace, all strive to catch and keep the eye, by brilliance of colour, complexity of structure or elaboration of ornament. Some of these things are so magnificent, so needlessly vast in scale, that one could not wish for a better illustration of the Baroque style. I am thinking in particular of the great silver clock and a towering monstrance which demands as setting nothing less than a cathedral choir designed by one of the more fantastic masters of Piedmontese Baroque. Strangely enough both of these objects were made to grace the bourgeois splendours of some Dutch interior.

No attempt has been made to decorate the rooms in the sort of colour scheme that would have been acceptable in the XVIIth century. The background throughout is a delicate grey, though an air of warmth is introduced with the help of the tapestries which cover most of the walls. A very good idea of the background against which many of these objects were originally shown can be gained from the complete room removed from a farm in Normandy which is believed to have been built as a hunting lodge for Henri IV of France. With its gilt mouldings, gilt panelling painted with scrollwork in colour, and panels of painted and gilt leather, it produces an effect of richness that is quite overpowering, and would surely spoil the effect of any of the smaller objects, were they set against it. This room has evidently been a difficult one to furnish, for its contents at present are of a surprisingly cosmopolitan nature for a remote hunting lodge in Normandy. They include a Genoese side-table of about the beginning of the XVIIIth century, a Dutch casket with stand of the latter years of the XVIIth century, two chairs in the Daniel Marot style, also of the latter years of the XVIIth century, and a Saxon chamber organ of the early XVIIIth century. The effect, if overpowering, is doubtless a fair representation of XVIIth century taste.

The range of rooms opened ends with a highly dramatic climax, as indeed any show of Baroque art should. The last room, shaped as an octagon, is hung with a set of late XVIIth century Flemish tapestries, against which are placed five white marble busts, including the magnificent Bernini bust of Mr. Baker, which must rank as one of the most important items in the whole Museum. The remarkable thing about it is that, if one looks past the superb swag of tumbling curls and splendid lace that make it so perfect an expression of Baroque feeling for magnificence, one finds in the earnest, almost melancholy expression, just that pathos, the exploitation of which made the Baroque masters the greatest exponents of religious art of all time.

M.A.Q.



# Restoration of Water-Colour Drawings

BY HENRY C. HALL

It might be said, with a certain amount of truth, that the moment an artist completes a work, whether in oils or water-colours, from then onwards the mischievous hand of Time takes over. While the work of the artist may have only taken days or weeks, it will be a matter of very many years before Time has taken its toll sufficiently to show itself, or impair a picture. But no painting can entirely escape this fate, though with care it can be guarded against and delayed during the passing years. Pictures in art galleries have this care bestowed upon them in various ways, quite apart from cleaning and restoring. Constantly under expert supervision, any sign of trouble is promptly arrested, and the galleries are kept at an equal temperature to avoid all trace of damp or chemical action. But this is not so in the larger private collections, or in the smaller ones of the modest collector. It would not in fact be expected, though some attention that could well be given is more often not provided. In the case of those who own a few pictures, and of paintings that are usually found in most households, such care is almost entirely lacking, and years of sheer neglect is quite common.

In recent years a great deal has been heard as to the advisability or otherwise of cleaning oil paintings, arguments by experts on the subject raging for months, and correspondence on this vexed question appearing in *The Times* and other papers, bringing forth new and valuable evidence. Finally of course it was proved beyond all doubt by the tribunal set up to investigate the problem, that cleaning and restoring of oil paintings is definitely right and essential, always

provided the work is carried out by those with long experience and the necessary skill. So much for the Old Masters and oil paintings in general. But what of water-colour drawings? What is the answer there? Is restoration advisable for old drawings in bad condition, and can it be done successfully? The answer is again in the affirmative, and in this short article I hope to prove it. Yet it is not so widely indulged in as with oil paintings, and the under-

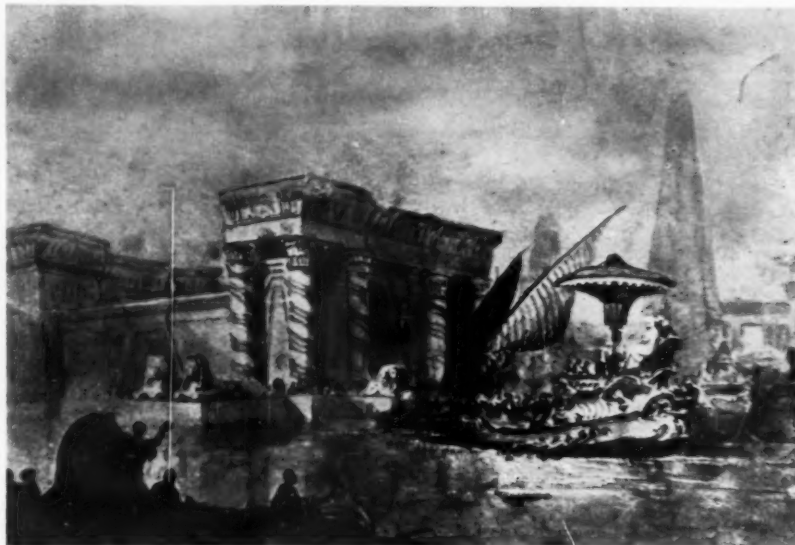


Fig. I. Water-Colour by W. Clarkson Stanfield, R.A. Before treatment.



Fig. II. The Water-Colour above by W. Clarkson Stanfield, R.A. After treatment.

taking of such work is not always looked upon with favour. Many old drawings therefore that are dirty, faded or "foxed" with age, are frequently left alone, no matter how much the defects detract from their beauty. They are to be seen not only in private collections but also in art galleries, and it is amazing what hoards of these "shabby-genteel" specimens of the art world are displayed.

The chief blemish on water-colours of considerable age is the damp spot, or "foxing" as it is called. These unsightly stains cannot always be avoided in old drawings of the XVIIIth and early XIXth centuries, or earlier. They are usually caused by infinitesimal particles of iron in the drawing-paper when manufactured, and after years of varying temperature and damp, some of these tiny fragments become rusted, thus setting up chemical action or fungus, and a small "damp spot" appears. In course of time they increase in size, and these dirty brownish stains are most unsightly, completely destroying the beauty of a water-colour, yet are frequently seen on mounts as well as drawings from the size of a pin point

## RESTORATION OF WATER-COLOUR DRAWINGS

to that of a pea, or larger. Other blemishes or flaws apart from damp stains are less conspicuous, as for instance minute specks of dirt or foreign matter adhering to the surface of the water-colour, due to it remaining in the same frame for years without attention. I have even seen very small dead flies or tiny insects beneath the glass of some. Still smaller defects that increase the neglected appearance are faded or discoloured mounts, slight dents or scratches, and minor eyesores that would not be tolerated if visible on an oil painting. Such drawings unfortunately abound, shabby spotted specimens badly needing care, and expected to be admired in this sorry state. It is my contention that a water-colour, to be admired and appreciated to the full, must be in flawless and immaculate condition, for one tiny black speck in the sky of a landscape, a small stain on the mount or other like distraction, is more than enough to spoil completely the charm and attraction of a fine old water-colour. Certainly the work of reviving them is vastly different from that of restoring paintings, the surface being extremely delicate and unhelpful to work upon in comparison, and the whole process and method of approach is dissimilar. Extreme care and unending patience are required to freshen up and restore them to something like their original state, but it can be done, as I hope to show.

As a collector of works of art in a small way for many years, I have in my collection about 200 paintings and water-colour drawings. A few of the paintings are of the XVIIth century, and most of the water-colours of the XVIIIth and early XIXth, and not a single picture in the collection is allowed to remain in bad condition. Oil paintings that need attention when purchased at auction are sent to professional picture restorers, but the water-colour drawings that require restoration due to age and dirt, and especially those with any damp spots, I now treat myself. Some restorers will undertake the work, and are prepared to remove damp stains with chemicals, but others are somewhat reluctant to attempt it. At least that has been my experience over a long period, and I now do my own, and have done so for some few years. In a short article of this nature it would be impossible to describe the method I employ, but I reproduce here two drawings from several I have treated, showing photographs before and after treatment of one, and after treatment only of the other. A glance at these examples will give a fair idea of what is possible, and the original drawings will also bear the closest scrutiny. It is precarious and difficult work requiring the maximum of patience, as well as some little skill in handling from start to finish. It provides added pleasure to the hobby of collecting, as there is considerable satisfaction in rescuing an art "patient" or more serious "hospital case," and restoring it to life again as a thing of beauty for at least another hundred years. My only claim is that it can be successfully carried out, and stains, spots, or any other defects removed for ever, all having vanished when the whole process is completed. A new mount may be necessary if the old one has a tired and worn look, or shows any sign of "foxing." The final result is a clean, attractive, and wholesome-looking water-colour in place of a dirty, faded, or spotted one. But in no sense is this restoration a case of putting "old wine into new bottles," for that would be an unpardonable offence. There is a very great charm and air of dignity about an old drawing softened and well mellowed with age, and that matured and vintage quality remains.

Of the two drawings here reproduced, the one by W. Clarkson Stanfield, R.A., might be correctly described as about the worst specimen that could be found for restoration, and probably one of the most difficult ever attempted. I might add that this is not one from my collection, and being so shockingly neglected for years it could no longer be considered a work of art, as will be seen from Fig. I, for something like one hundred damp stains of the worst type and of varying sizes covered nearly the whole of it like a rash. It was in fact a sorry sight, and, from its appearance alone, quite apart from the discovery that many of the damp spots had eaten well into the paper itself, it seemed quite beyond all hope. But it



Fig. III. Water-Colour by William Shayer. After treatment. Seven damp stains were removed from this drawing, and much ingrained dirt over the whole surface.

was restored by me for a friend chiefly to prove that no water-colour should be deemed impossible or too far gone. And in Fig. II the same drawing is shown as it is to-day, fit to hang alongside others in perfect condition, or ranked among the "first flight" of any collection.

The second one, Fig. III, is a water-colour by William Shayer, and is shown here only after restoration, as I have no photograph available of its sorry condition before my work commenced. But I can definitely vouch that serious "foxing" above the skyline destroyed the whole of its beauty, consisting of seven damp stains of varying shades and sizes, two in the blue of the sky and five scattered over the clouds. In addition there was much ingrained dirt over the whole surface, partially obscuring the finer detail, and yet, in comparison with the Stanfield drawing, this small Shayer was a simple task. Fig. III shows the state of it to-day in my collection, no trace of any of the seven spots being visible, with the crisp outline and all the detail revealed as originally painted by the artist.

In conclusion, it should be remembered that these examples of restoration are the work of an amateur following his hobby of picture collecting, and not the work of a professional restorer. But at least they demonstrate what can be achieved when finally this problem has to be tackled, and prove that valuable old water-colours, dirty or spotted with age and neglect, can be so revived as to regain all their original elegance and charm.

The recent cleaning of two oil paintings in the National Gallery recalls the difficulties of the precise determination of attributions; one of them, "The Adoration of the Kings," was bought in 1884 as the work of Giovanni Bellini (1435 c.-1516), is now catalogued as by Bonifazio (1487-1553), but labelled "attributed to Giorgione," and in the opinion of the present National Gallery Director, cleaning has clearly shown it to be an undoubted early work of Giorgione himself; the other, the "Portrait of a Man," by Titian, was bought as his work in 1904. It probably already bore the signature Titianus in 1641, when Van Dyck arranged a bid for it at Amsterdam.

Besides Titianus the picture is inscribed with a large T V. Cleaning has proved that the Titianus is of later date, and it is no longer visible. The T V is authentic. These initials appear also on the portrait of a woman attributed to Titian. They might well be Titian's initials, standing for Tiziano Vecellio; but they are also found on pictures not generally accepted as by Titian. Some art historians contend that this portrait is not by Titian but largely by Giorgione. It continues in the catalogue as by Titian although the uncertainty remains. The costume dates the picture about 1510, the last year of Giorgione's life.

# NUT TREEN PART II—COQUILLA NUTS

BY EDWARD H. PINTO

ALL the decorative objects illustrated in Figs. I to XI are made from coquilla nuts, the existence of which as treen seems to have been almost forgotten. The purpose of illustrating such a wide variety of these nuts and describing them in some detail, is to assist identification, because at present these objects are usually described by dealers as being made of "burr" or "root" wood, occasionally as box wood or walnut. Except for the "eggs," the possibility of their being nuts is ignored and sometimes ridiculed.

My wife and I became interested in their material after we had collected a few examples and noted the same feature in all specimens—namely, the curious and sometimes tortoiseshell-like mottle and the absence of long grain. Our suspicions did not crystallise until one of the pieces broke and I tried to glue it, a task which at first proved impossible to accomplish, owing to the characteristically oily nature of the "wood." That made me even more suspicious as to the true nature of the material. Further investigation of some thirty or forty differently shaped examples, all of which only had the "mottle" in common, showed that while the finished designs, shapes, ornaments and quality of the articles varied considerably, they were obviously made from a material which was only obtainable in a very limited size. When the object which it was desired to make exceeded that size, it was usual to build up the form by joining up a varying number of coquilla rings, which were threaded together without glue and could be unscrewed. Only one thing remained to prove that they were nuts and finally I found it: a specimen which showed the "eyes" in the end.

The next stage in the hunt was a visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, where my friend, Dr. F. N. Howes, was quickly able to identify the nut as coquilla (*attalea funifera*) and to provide a lot of most interesting information, as well as show me the specimens which appear in Fig. I. In the upper case are to be seen at the top two whole nuts, which are about the size of duck eggs; in the middle row, left and right, the halves of a two-kernel nut split in half, and at the bottom, left and right, the halves of a one-kernel nut. In the centre is another two-kernel nut, cut horizontally to show the sections. Sometimes these nuts have three kernels.

Coquillas are the nuts of the *attalea funifera* or, as the Brazilians call the palm, the *Piassaba*, which has an extensive distribution on the eastern side of South America, where it grows in swampy or partially flooded land on the banks of rivers. This same palm is also one of the sources of South American piassava fibre, which has been used in bass brooms for many centuries.

B. Seeman, in his *Popular History of Palms and their Allies*, published in 1856 says: "The nuts of *Piassaba* are also an article of commerce, long brought to England under the name of 'Coquillas.' Being excessively hard, beautifully mottled with dark and light brown, and capable of taking a very high polish, they are extensively used for turnery-work, especially in making the handles of bell-pulls, the knobs of walking-sticks and umbrellas, and similar articles."

Two turned knobs and a "dog" snuff-box are shown at the bottom of Fig. I. The cohune (*attalea cohune*), an allied nut, very similar to the coquilla, but with a thinner shell, has also been used for turnery.

So much for the nuts themselves; details of where and in some cases when they were converted into treen is much more shadowy and I am hoping that publication of these articles will bring some facts to light. So far, I have not been able to find any definite

proof of the place in which any of the objects illustrated were turned, carved or pierced. In quite a number of instances, I know where and, in some instances, when particular types were generally offered for sale, but that is not the same as knowing the place of manu-



Fig. I. (Top) Coquilla nuts and sections of nuts. (Centre) Rosaries made from coquilla nut shell. (Below) Turned coquilla knobs and "dog" snuff-box.



Fig. II. (Extreme left and right) Rare XVIth century snuff-boxes, "Dutch lady" snuff-box, an etui, and a flask and oval snuff-box carved with great skill.



## NUT TREEN



Fig. III. Reverse or alternate views of the objects in Fig. II.

lature. However, the relating together of certain common elements of design with the places in which similar objects were offered for sale gives grounds for the suggestions which I hazard as to locality of manufacture, whilst fashions in design of related wood and ivory objects of known dates provide hints as to the dates of coquillas. It must be emphasised, however, that this and the next (concluding) article of this series are written quite unashamedly to obtain as well as to impart information about this fascinating but forgotten tortoiseshell-mottled nut treen.

Coquillas were probably introduced into Europe at least as early as the middle of the XVIth century, judging from the designs of the two French snuff-boxes on the extreme left and right of Figs. II and III, which show the reverse sides or different views of all the same objects. These two snuff-boxes have, as their centre motifs on each face, what are known as "Romaine" heads, which had their vogue in the middle of the XVIth century, the period which saw the introduction of snuff to France. It could, of course, be argued that these two boxes were made at a later time in a bygone fashion, but they appear to be that great rarity, two snuff-boxes genuinely made round about 1559, when Catherine de Medici received her first parcel of snuff. Their general appearance bears this out, not only in respect of carving and condition but also because the technique used in their construction is crude and entirely different from that of all the other coquilla treen which we have. In these two pieces no turnery is employed; the shell is used in almost its whole thickness, with the inside as left by the

removal of the kernel. In consequence, the snuff cavity is much smaller than would be expected. The foliated bands which form the ends of the boxes are separate and are solid blocks of nut shell, dowelled into the ends of the centre portion with metal pins. One end of the box on the left, as can be seen in the photograph, is coming apart.

The oval snuff-box and the flask (the latter standing in two rubber rings to balance it on end) are both of a type which is usually found along the northern shores of the western Mediterranean. I know of several which have been purchased in Sicily. These two examples appear to be early XVIIth century work and probably both from the same hand; exceptionally fine work it is too, the carving being fine in scale and extremely delicate, much of it deeply undercut and some of it free standing. Both pieces depict some mythological subjects connected with the chase and they include in their compositions either winged men and women or very mortal-looking angels, hunting dogs, dead game, trophies, birds, vines, pomegranates and flowers. The flask, which technically is the cleverest coquilla carving I have seen, terminates at the "bugbear" end in a ferocious face with silver mounted eyed and flask mouth, which is shown face forward in Fig. IV. The other end (which in Figs. II and III is hidden in the rubber rings used to hold the flask for photographing, terminates in the pointed beards of twin heads, back to back. The remaining objects in Figs. II and III are a very naturalistic "Dutch lady" snuff-box of the XVIIth century and a French *etui*, which are both shown closed and open.

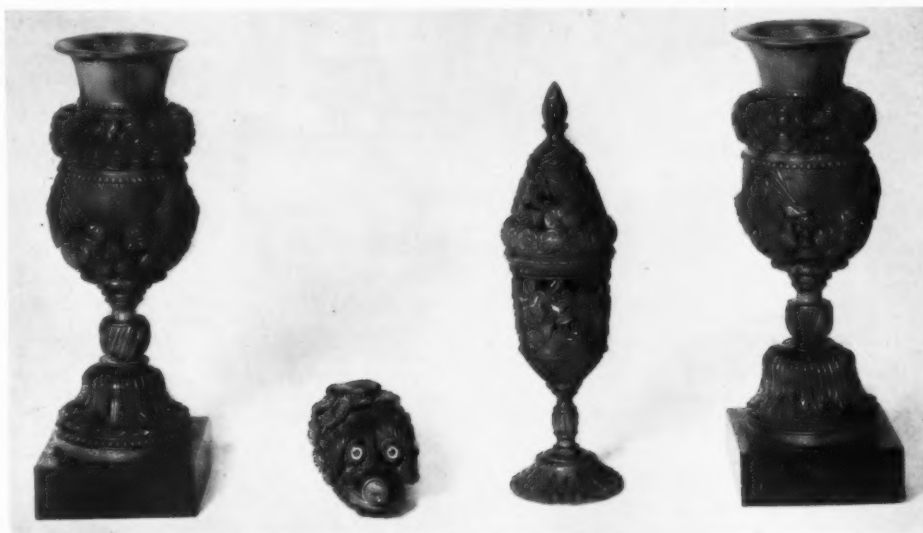


Fig. IV. Another view of the flask shown in Figs. II and III, and three carved urns which demonstrate the technique of building up out of threaded coquilla "rings."

# APOLLO

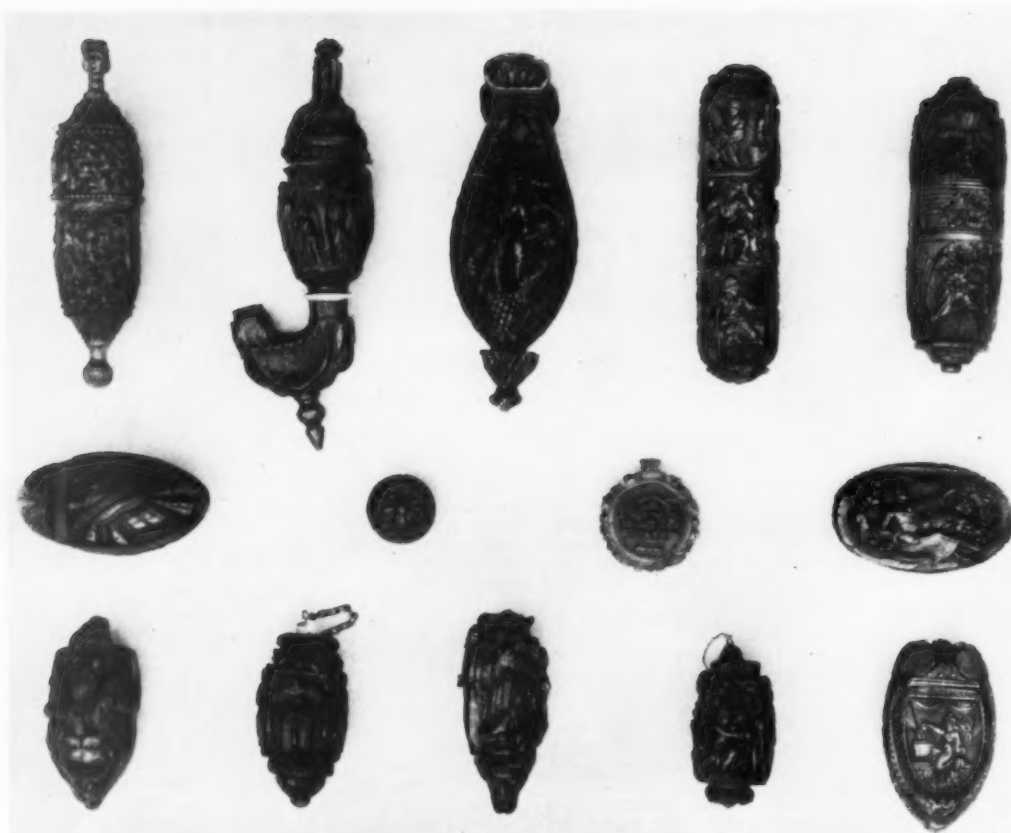


Fig. V. Finely carved coquilla examples. The specimens central and to the right of centre of bottom row are outstanding.

The *etui* is made of four sections of nut, threaded together. The small urn in Fig. IV, which is carved and pierced, is treated with the motifs already described in the oval snuff-box and flask but without the depth of carving; it probably dates from about 1750-75. The pair of urns on ebony blocks seem to be of later date, showing some of the Biedermeier characteristics of the first half of the XIXth century. These urns demonstrate very clearly the "threaded ring" technique generally used in building up coquilla objects. Working from the top, the "telephone mouthpiece" is No. 1 ring, the wreath is No. 2, the main body No. 3, the stem No. 4, and the base No. 5. The small urn likewise consists of five parts. Most of the other pieces which will be described are built up in a like manner.

In Fig. V is a further selection of good quality specimens. In the top row, No. 1 left is extremely delicately carved and pierced and suggests French work of about 1700. The second, the pipe bowl with meerschaum lining, was probably made for the German market. The third, the ship snuff-box, belongs to a skilfully carved and clearly defined French group which depicts warships of the Napoleonic era with elaborately carved figure-heads, ports bristling with cannon and sometimes with the names of the ships carved on the stern. Usually they have a laudatory inscription, or a figure or a bust of Napoleon on the lid which forms the "deck." This particular example, a model of the warship *Miner*, shows Neptune mounted on a crocodile-like monster. Boxes of this type are usually made from three nutshells pegged together to give the required length. The fourth object, a cylindrical box made from threaded rings of coquilla, is finely carved with scenes of the Crucifixion. The cylindrical box on the extreme right could be Dutch or German. The oval snuff-boxes at both ends of the middle row are good quality XVIIIth century specimens. The one on the right depicts Daniel in the lion's den. The backs of both boxes closely resemble

the carving of the oval box in Fig. III. The small circular box and the scent flask in the centre are dainty, but not outstanding. In the bottom row the two snuff-boxes at the extreme ends are of good quality; that on the right is mounted in silver. Two of the three flasks in between are outstanding. The left flask is rather suggestive of Mount Athos work, but the other two are French of the XVIIIth century and the finest quality. The central flask, depicting a scene in the slave market, is a most artistic production and the one on the right, much more classical in style with its story of "Paris" and the apple, is equally as fine. (To be concluded.)

The Department of State at Washington, D.C., announce the publication at 25 cents of the *International Protection of Works of Art and Historic Monuments*, prepared from essays by Charles De Vischer, Professor of International Law at the University of Louvain and a judge on the International Court of Justice. The foreword by Ardelia Ripley Hall reminds us that the preservation of cultural and historic objects is an international responsibility and not of one individual national self interest alone, and that succeeding generations should have an awareness of the responsibilities of their succession to inviolable trusts.

It may not be possible to measure the volume of spoliation and destruction of World War II with that of ancient times but the restitution has been on an almost incredibly large scale and the misfortunes of the overrun countries by pillage have been considerably less than may have been expected.

The precautions which should be taken during wars, if exceedingly difficult to achieve, will at least receive complete agreement, but the restoration of treasures acquired by treaty or agreement of one kind or another in good and proper form "under the sky that had witnessed their birth and in the surroundings that their creators intended" will provoke unending argument.



## BOOKS REVIEW

### Chinese Art: A Plain Man's Guide

THE appearance of two books bearing the same title within little more than two years is bound to provoke a comparison, especially as both are the work of professors at American universities. Their common title is *A Short History of Chinese Art*. First in the field was Professor Ludwig Bachhofer of Chicago University with a fine volume published by Batsfords but "manufactured in the U.S.A." As might be expected, the production was unexceptionable and comprised a generous allowance of well-chosen plates of high quality (with the unfortunate exception of the coloured frontispiece). But the book was far more limited in its scope than its title implies, and the author treats only of bronzes, sculpture, and painting, each occupying its own separate section of the book, where it is traced from its origins to the point when, in the author's view, it becomes unworthy of further notice.

Now comes Professor Hugo Munsterberg to give his version, published at 85 by his own Michigan State College in the "Philosophical Library." This is a much more modest book, smaller in size and less sumptuous in production; the plates are fewer and less good, and none is in colour. But it has a far better claim to the title than its more pretentious predecessor. It is arranged in dynastic chapters, each beginning with a brief sketch of the political and cultural background, and proceeding to the various forms of art practised under the dynasty or dynasties in question. In addition to bronzes, sculpture, and painting, the author surveys architecture, ceramics, and a number of "minor arts," and includes valuable digressions on early symbolism, Taoist myths, and other essential "background" topics. His book is a straightforward, workmanlike, and reasonably complete introduction to the subject, which may be confidently recommended to the "layman" for whom, as Professor Munsterberg points out in his Preface, it is primarily intended. There is no doubt, however, that even those who are considered (or consider themselves) to have risen above that humble status will find this book an invaluable pocket-companion to their studies. The author covers a mass of detail, but never loses sight of the broader picture; the basic changes which took place from time to time in the national life and outlook of the Chinese, and their reflection in the art of the successive periods, are clearly and convincingly brought out.

In a book of this kind, however, the absence of a map is unfortunate, and a chronological table (occupying no more than a page) might also have been advantageously included. A page of simple line-drawings of the various types of early bronze ritual vessels, with the Chinese names by which they are known, would probably have conveyed more to Professor Munsterberg's "layman" than the three or four pages which he devotes to describing them. Since there is nothing "modern" or messy about the arts they study, most orientalists are staunch reactionaries, and that is why a number of them may well resent such "progressive" parallels as that drawn by the author between the Ming artist Shên Chou and the French painters Matisse and Braque, the mention of whom in

the same breath as one of the great Chinese masters appears almost sacrilegious.

From the point of view of the collector of limited means, or the small dealer, this book, in common with almost all other recent works on Chinese art, omits many classes of objects of later date which are frequently encountered in the sale-room and very popular among collectors. Cloisonné is completely ignored, Han silks are the only textiles to which attention is given, and neither jade, bronzes, lacquer, nor ivories of the Ch'ing period are mentioned. Admittedly current opinion has assumed a supercilious attitude (in which a trace of snobbery may sometimes be detected) towards these later products; there are very few things of later date than the Sung dynasty which your pundit of to-day will accept as Art (with a capital A). But the fact remains that the best of them are among the most exquisite examples of Chinese craftsmanship, and it must be admitted that, rightly or wrongly, they constitute seventy-five per cent of "Chinese Art" to many amateurs who are unable to afford £500 for a Shang bronze.

But all these are small criticisms, and should discourage nobody. All who are interested in Far Eastern art are indebted to Professor Munsterberg for this admirably concise yet comprehensive handbook, and those who wish to pursue the subject further will find a good classified bibliography at the end.

B.W.R.

### Present Thoughts on Ancient Stained and Painted Glass

*THE ANCIENT GLASS OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.* By Bernard Rackham, C.B., F.S.A. 194 pp. + 20 full-page collotype plates in colour and 80 in monochrome. (Lund Humphries & Co. Ltd.) £12 12s. The edition limited to 960 copies.

#### AN APPRECIATION

by

KENNETH ROMNEY TOWNDROW

IT is the greatest pity that a book of this nature, however expensively produced, should be limited in numbers, for its influence should, in all justice, be active far beyond those circles of the obviously interested: the historians and students of stained and painted glass. These latter will have known for many years the dignity and clarity of Mr. Rackham's authority on the subject, and to them this magnificent work will be a delight, but no surprise.

Here, accessible at will, is a bird's-eye view, as it were, of England's most complete surviving example of early glass, still bearing much of its power to hold the attention and tell to the spell-bound an enthralling story of faith and the will to balance expression with beauty and the right use of a highly technical medium. In a first glance at this unique series of illustrations, it is ironical to recall the complacent clap-trap that would have one believe the glass depicted was designed and made as a kind of super-hoarding to tempt an illiterate and uninstructed people; or that, bearing in mind our present colour of propaganda by press, radio, platform and hoarding, we are, in principle, superior in education and intelligence. This book should be in every reference library, art school and social centre. I devoutly wish that every group of business men and politicians sitting over the problem of democracy's failure to coalesce, could be compelled to concentrate upon the story, here told and illustrated, of a period in history when it was not beyond the comprehension of leadership that a price must be paid for social unity beyond the bare wages of bread

and shelter, however universally these may be paid. Professor Baldwin Brown described the ruling spirit of XIIIth century Western Europe as a "contagious impulse," and the source of that fever was no more to be found in the wages and doles of the Middle Ages than it is to-day in their equivalent services. Mr. Rackham dedicates his work to that great English teacher and prophet W. R. Lethaby, and quotes: "It is impossible to explain in words the content of perfect Gothic art. It is frank, clear, gay; it is passionate, mystical and tender; it is energetic, clear, sharp, strong and healthy. It would be a mistake to define it in terms of form alone; it embodies a spirit, an aspiration, an age." And lest this be dismissed as an obituary, rather than appreciated as living words, I would add that Lethaby also wrote: "A fine architecture is the builded form of noble manners of life," a statement less easy to forget as it was not applied to any particular period in history, but to man's creative being wherever it exists or is clamorous for existence.

The ancient glass at Canterbury is only one result of the spark that, in the Middle Ages, fired the whole of Western Europe into a state of communal ecstasy which left untouched little that could be described as human activity. To-day, fitfully, that flame of Christendom persists dim and frustrated, the creative instincts still engendered finding their now sterile or positively anti-social outlets in ignorance of the splendid past, and in defiance of exhortations by rulers without spiritual virtue and therefore social understanding.

It is significant that the labour behind the production of this inspiring book is, as befits its subject, the result of communal thought and planning, the distillation of a task of scholarship and conservation that began more than thirty years ago, during the war of 1914-18, and still continues at the hands of men as faithful and persevering as were the craftsmen whose works they live to perpetuate. The salvation in two wars of the glass at Canterbury, by its removal and storage, gave the opportunity that could otherwise hardly have arisen to examine, chronicle, clean and fortify the windows as a whole. Errors of the past, brought about through damage, decay and ignorance over the centuries, have been discovered, checked and, where possible, corrected. A complete photographic record has been taken, and even the search successfully begun to recover recognisable fragments of glass dispersed at odd times during the last three hundred years when conservation as a pious duty was hardly recognised, still less practised. On two occasions during the late war the temporary plain windows of the Cathedral were blown out by bomb-blast, and ancient window armatures twisted from their beds. No iconoclasts of the past threatened more complete destruction, and certainly no former guardians have better fulfilled their trust. And, supporting this activity by every means within their powers, have been the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral who now crown and give witness to the whole project by sponsoring the publication of this unique history.

Four years have been spent upon the book's production, and from the historian's point of view it is a model source book of English XIIth and XIIIth century glass. Here is an invaluable concentration of all contemporary notes and writings of past centuries, and here, together with more modern writings, all comes under the gentle but firm scrutiny of Mr. Rackham, from whom, it is to be hoped, such standards of critical scholarship will light the way for all future works towards the better understanding of medieval stained and painted glass. In spite of the volume's size (12½ x 9½), its plan is simple and its paper and binding so sound that it is a pleasure to use, and rightly it will encourage the amateur even as it makes smooth the way of the student.

But the contemporary inspiration of the book is in its magnificent series of plates, coloured and monochrome, and in the introductory



section of the text which bears the concentrated results of Mr. Rackham's survey of a subject that I cannot but feel is very much more to him than an abstract interest, an antiquarian's fascination. From the glassman's point of view I regret that more space was not given throughout to the technical problems of his great craft; but his place as a designer, as an artist resolving his ever urgent struggle for creative expression down the centuries, is succinctly stated under appropriate sectional headings in the Introduction.

Mr. Rackham is an enthusiastic admirer of the Lombardic letter that was used to such effect in the great Genealogical figure windows of the original Canterbury clerestory plan, and can still be enjoyed in the "Semei," "Rhesa," "Sem," "Lamech" and "Mathusala" windows. He also discusses the loss to articulate window design by the change from the wide single lights of the late Romanesque and Early English windows, to the complicated fenestration of the Decorated and later periods, with the resultant discarding of the *armature* without which, in all its variety of supporting strength, we could not have the multiple splendours of XIIIth century glass. But perhaps we should be more grateful for Mr. Rackham's summing up of "The Question of French Influence," with its lucid explanation of Westlake's errors of nomenclature and timing which perpetuated, in a succession of French scholars, an altogether false estimate of English glass design; and this in spite of one of their number, Henri G rent , who as early as 1846 paid signal honour, in its own right, to the glass at Canterbury. Our own Hugh Arnold<sup>1</sup> suffered from the same disability in criticism as late as 1913, and thus Mr. Rackham has done a very necessary service in confirming the demand for more fundamental research into this problem.

Incidentally, it is interesting to note some of the results in cleaning the Canterbury glass by comparing the excellent painted records of Lawrence Saint, made before the first World War in preparation for the book in which he collaborated with Hugh Arnold, and those executed for the present work by Miss Brodick.

Finally, it is to the modern artist in stained and painted glass that I would most seriously appeal in the urgent conviction that his whole future as a creative agent can be established by his understanding of the spirit celebrated by this book. As a result of war damage, of the building of new churches, and the replacement of inferior XIXth century glass, the craft is flourishing. William Morris, by teaching and practice, revived the large use of pot metals and discouraged the habit of enamel painting on clear glass. His precepts have had lasting but not, unfortunately, universal effect. Before the late war, such examples on a grand scale as the windows in Liverpool Cathedral by James Hogan and Herbert Hendrie vindicated the revival; while such men as Emmanuel Vigiland in Norway and Pierre Labouret in France, between the wars, brought a new spirit of vigour and largeness to both the design and materials of stained glass. It is therefore the more deplorable that many artists still design for glass as for the less reputable academic easel painting, and carry out their designs in materials that recall the worst excesses of XIXth century Bar-le-Duc and German glass. Certainly the aniline hues and peculiarly inconsistent draughtsmanship of the Battle-of-Britain window in the Henry VII Chapel at Westminster has no ancient supporters to increase the embarrassment to the sensitive eye, but surely, with the publication we here discuss, it is not too much to ask that its practical splendours shall in future be consulted by all those whose responsibility it is, artists and councils alike, to compete in our ancient churches with the often superlative craftsmanship of the past, and in our new temples prove that we are not altogether unworthy of a great and vital tradition that still has its distinguished creators.



Pharaoh dismissing the Israelites. Circa 1200. North choir aisle. From *The Ancient Glass of Canterbury Cathedral*.

It is justly pleasant to read Mr. Rackham's tribute to that fine glassman, by nature and inheritance, Mr. Samuel Caldwell; and Messrs. Lund Humphries are to be congratulated upon their reliance in production on the firm taste and balanced enthusiasm of Mr. Norman Parley. All told, an altogether notable event in the history of English publishing.

<sup>1</sup>Saint and Arnold, *Stained Glass of the Middle Ages in England and France*, 1913.

PAUL GAUGUIN. Heinemann. 30s. net.

A man does not generally throw up a lucrative occupation, a loving wife and the comforts of a sophisticated society for nothing, and it was certainly not without good reason that Paul Gauguin did each of these things. An intimate knowledge of the biographical details, however, is hardly necessary to recognise an artist with a burning, urgent message; one has only to look at his pictures to judge how obsessed was this lonely man with an often savage will to create. The key to his art—and indeed his whole life—was a fierce refusal to compromise, coupled with an exquisitely tender appreciation for natural harmonies of colour and form.

John Rewald, who contributes the short but valuable letterpress to the new Gauguin Picture Book by Hyperion, makes this illuminating point: "Gauguin succeeded in matching his visual with his visionary qualities. He found the perfect harmony between what he saw and what he imagined." The tragic details of his life, his painful illnesses, the almost total neglect of his pictures by his contemporaries, his many domestic sorrows, none of these things ever once intruded upon the complete realisation of his vision; this plastic expression, from the

first, was direct and serene. Perhaps the brief period in Arles with Van Gogh with its attendant catastrophies, sixteen years after another fateful and not dissimilar fusion of combustible forces, those of Verlaine and Rimbaud, finally decided Gauguin that the only aesthetic climate suitable for his work was a peaceful solitude in a distant land.

The wonderful canvases from Tahiti soaked in the gold of the dazzling sunshine are a convincing tribute to his intuition. "The Woman with the Mangoes" (No. 118), to mention one of his finest pictures, has a monumental quality and grandeur which far surpasses anything to be seen in European painting of that epoch—it is not until Picasso produced his marvellous series of "Blue" portraits that such weight has been expressed in paint; but for all his undeniable power, Picasso has never been able to combine this quality with the sensual warmth that is never absent from Gauguin's pictures.

Gauguin was a proud man, he had need to be, for he was a pioneer, and as such generally misunderstood; when in his agony, he wrote to his wife: "I am a great artist and know it. It is because I know it that I have endured so many sufferings in order to proceed on my way, otherwise I should consider myself a brigand—which by the way, I am for many people," he was not guilty of the slightest bombast, he was stating a simple truth in his characteristically direct way. Subtleties he left for the whispering Vahines with their childlike eyes and their profound mystery.

The plates, for this is primarily a picture-book, have been thoughtfully chosen and annotated, and if the quality of the reproduction—and this is especially true of the colour-plates—does leave something to be desired, here at any rate is a very generous thirty-bob's worth.

A.K.S.

## SALE ROOM NOTES & PRICES

BY BRICOLEUR

**D**ESPITE the great number of pictures, pieces of silver, porcelain, furniture and other works of art which come up for sale at public auctions every month, the over-riding complaint from dealers is that there is still insufficient of the best pieces to go round. It appears that fine quality antiques are being sold principally to British collectors; American buyers for the greater part showing a stronger interest in Regency and later XIXth century bric-à-brac.

**PICTURES.** At Christie's sale of 16th December a painting by the XVIIIth century French artist, J. Vernet, of a Bay Scene, with fishermen and boats, 38½ in. by 52½ in., made 170 gns. Those who have visited the superb exhibition of French Landscape Painting at Burlington House will recall the similar pictures by Vernet. A pair of French pictures, "Painting" and "Architecture," attributed to F. Boucher, made 190 gns., and a small Fragonard, "St. Peter with the Cock Crowning," 13½ in. by 9 in., from the Liebermann Collection, Berlin, and sold with a certificate from Dr. M. J. Friedlaender, 160 gns. A flowerpiece, in the style of Baptiste, made 22 gns. Two pictures by J. F. de Troy, "Christ at the House of Simon" and "Christ and the Woman taken in Adultery," made 160 gns. and 100 gns. respectively. Of the pictures by British artists the most important was a landscape, 35 in. by 28 in., "Castle Acre Priory" by John Crome, at 640 gns. A portrait of Sir John Frederick, Bart., and another of his wife, by J. Russell, R.A., made 180 gns. These had been exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1792. A pastel portrait of Miss Darby, afterwards Mrs. Perdita Robinson, by the same artist, signed and dated 1793, made 60 gns., and another pastel portrait of Mrs. Walker King, same artist, 30 gns. Two pictures by James Stark, "Bird Scarcers" and "A View of Norfolk," made good prices, 300 gns. and 110 gns. An indication of the value of late XIXth century genre painting is shown by the bid of 220 gns. for a picture dated 1883, by Sir W. Q. Orchardson, of Voltaire dining with the Duc de Sully, after being horsewhipped, etc., etc. This had been exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1883 and at the Guildhall in 1895. The bids made for the familiar pictures of genial scarlet-robed cardinals remain high, to the surprise of those who, whilst admitting the degree of technical skill, see no aesthetic merit in them. "A Cardinal reading a Book," 10 in. by 8 in., by Georges Croegaert (Paris), made 120 gns., and another panel, "Checkmated," by the same artist, 210 gns. Some pictures by modern British painters included two by the former P.R.A., Sir A. J. Munnings: "Harvest Time," 19½ in. by 23½ in., 35 gns., and "Cattle at a Stream," 24 in. by 29 in., 45 gns. "A Jug of Flowers," by Dod Proctor, R.A., 23 in. by 17 in., made 15 gns., and an unframed picture by F. W. Watts, "A Woody Stream," 50 gns. "The Pink Elbow," by Sir W. Russell Flint, R.A., made 60 gns. Two pictures by the Victorian academician, J. MacWhirter, shown at the Academy exhibitions of 1880 and 1885, had once aroused sufficient acclaim for them to be engraved. To-day the originals of "Loch Scaig, Isle of Skye," and "The Lord of the Glen," brought no more than 3 gns. each.

A pair of Jan Brueghel landscapes, "Winter" and "Summer," 10½ in. by 14 in., brought 400 gns.

Sotheby's held a sale of water-colour drawings shortly before Christmas. Some by Rowlandson included "Outside the Inn," a group of peasants and children eating and drinking, 9 in. by 11½ in., £52; "The Elopement," a girl climbing from a window into her lover's arms, 9½ in. by 15 in., £70, and "Outside the Old Red Lion," £100. "The Primrose Gatherers," by Birket Foster, 13 in. by 23½ in., made £160, and a landscape by Sutton Palmer, slightly smaller, £28. A William Etty study of a female nude made £4; three drawings, including one by Edward Lear, £5, and "A Scene at the door of an Eastern Coffee Shop," by J. F. Lewis, R.A., 1866, 14½ in. by 9 in., £92. An Augustus John portrait drawing, H. C. Armstrong, in pencil, signed, made £14, and another, B. O. Schonegenel, £30. A still life by Raoul Dufy, 1914, 8½ in. by 11 in., £62, and a Gino Sverini, "La Persienne Verte," signed, 46½ in. by 35 in., £30. A seascape by Eugene Boudin brought £70. "Sailors in Conversation," by Edward Burra, 1930, made £36, and a John Nash, "The Window," 30 in. by 24 in., £22.

Other modern drawings included Study No. 3 for "Newmarket Start," Royal Academy, 1947, by Sir Alfred Munnings, P.R.A., at £380; "Dasha, the Serbian Dancer," by Sir W. Russell Flint, R.A., made £50, and a W. G. de Glehn, R.A., study of a female nude, £42. A portrait of a lady by Dame Laura Knight, R.A., brought £10. There were also a large number of drawings by E. M. Wimperis, V.P.R.I.: A river landscape, 1900, 23½ in. by 35½ in., made £120; "The Mill on the Common," 1899, £110; "A View of Hemingford Priory," 1892, £75, and a number of others ranging in price from £18 to £34. A Constable view of Hampstead Heath, showing Judge's Walk, taken from the same point of view as that of the same subject in the Victoria and Albert Museum, 7½ in. by 10½ in., £55. A fine Peter de Wint drawing

of a view in Exeter made £750, and a Gainsborough three-quarter length portrait of his friend, William Jackson of Exeter, 49 in. by 39 in., £190.

Puttick and Simpson held three picture sales during the period under review. On December 14th a "View of the Thames," by J. B. Pyne (1833), made £21, and an Italian picture with a classical figure subject, £40. A XIXth century picture by Andrews, with figures in period costume, brought £135; "A Riverside Scene," by A. Perez, £72, and a fine portrait of a young girl holding a bird, by G. Serburg, 36 in. by 24 in., £310. On the previous day at Robinson and Foster a de Witte interior of a church, unframed, made £55 12s., and a three-quarter length portrait of Catherine the Great, by Nicholas Volkov Rohotoff, 1730, £75 12s. At Phillips, Son and Neale a James Stark painting of cattle in a woody landscape brought £75, and a XVIIth century Italian Virgin and Child, on a circular panel, £52.

**SILVER.** Christie's sale of December 12th included some XVIIIth century Irish pieces. A plain spherical teapot by Thomas Bolton, Dublin, 1715, 21 oz. 5 dwt., brought 360 gns.; an oval inkstand, with three vases, 9½ in. wide, by William Townsend, Dublin, 1748, 25 oz. 18 dwt., 110 gns.; an oval cake basket on four mask and scroll feet emblematic of the seasons, by Charles Leslie, Dublin, 1740, 54 oz. 17 dwt., 100 gns. A George I plain circular bowl, on spreading foot, by Matthew Copeland, Dublin, circa 1725, overstruck by the mark of William Townsend, 18 oz. 13 dwt., 150 gns., and a pair of large plain sauceboats, with lions' mask and claw feet, Dublin, circa 1752, maker's mark G.B., perhaps for George Beere, 50 oz. 13 dwt., 52 gns. An oblong teapot, sugar basin and cream jug, by Richard Sawyer, Dublin, 1814, gross weight 36 oz. 17 dwt., 62 gns.

A set of three George I plain octagonal casters, by Samuel Welder, 1720, 21 oz. 11 dwt., 145 gns., and twenty-eight plain circular dinner plates, 1760 (one nine years later), 424 oz. 5 dwt., 200 gns. A pair of George I table candlesticks on hexagonal bases, by Bowles Nash, 1725, 30 oz. 19 dwt., 200 gns., and a silver-gilt stirrup cup, with the date 1770, inscribed *Success to Stag-Hunting and all our Friends round Dunkry Beacon*, maker's mark T.P., 12 oz. 6 dwt., 120 gns. A George II plain cylindrical tankard and cover, with a coat-of-arms in a baroque cartouche, by Gabriel Sleath, 1729, 40 oz. 10 dwt., 155 gns., and a fine pair of small plain tazze, with detachable feet, by Paul de Lamerie, 1719, 18 oz. 18 dwt., 250 gns. A pair of French candlesticks with hexagonal bases and baluster stems chased with shells, by P. Latour, Toulouse, 1759, 41 oz. 18 dwt., made 30 gns.

A George III oval tea tray, 1803, 64 oz. 4 dwt., made £135 at a December sale at Sotheby's. A pair of Scottish double-lipped sauceboats, with reeded scroll handles, 10 in. wide, Assay Master Hugh Gordon, Edinburgh, 1751, 38 oz. 16 dwt., made £105, and a James II caster, with cylindrical body, maker's mark F.O. in monogram, 1685, 9 oz. 14 dwt., £66. A heavy George II cake basket, engraved with a cypher in a rococo cartouche, probably by Edward Aldridge, London, 68 oz. 16 dwt., £75. A set of three casters by Thomas Bamford, 1730, 22 oz. 13 dwt., brought £58, and another set of three similar casters, but of slightly earlier date, maker's mark I.G., 10 oz. 3 dwt., the same price. A late George II tea kettle with inverted pear-shaped body engraved with armorials, by Thomas Whipham, London, 1756, 83 oz. 17 dwt. (all in), £40. A George II tea caddy by Andrew Fogelberg and Stephen Gilbert, 1790, 21 oz. 4 dwt. (all in), £66. A collection of some two hundred and twenty-eight pieces of table silver, with a total weight of 219 oz. 13 dwt., brought £85.

Amongst the lesser items a pair of silver-plated wine coolers brought £6; an oval plated soup tureen, with lobed body, the same price; a pair of plated table candlesticks of Adam design, £8. A Georgian silver cake basket, London, 1826, 33 oz. 18 dwt., made £8, and a George III coffee pot, with vase-shaped body engraved with a crest, London, 1769, 29 oz. 12 dwt. (all in), £9.

At Puttick and Simpson an Indian tea and coffee service chased with narrow bands of figure subjects, 141 oz. 10 dwt., made £35; a pair of large candelabra, for seven lights, 159 oz. 10 dwt., £105; a modern rat-tail table service with a weight of 107 oz. 10 dwt., £34, and a modern circular salver of early Georgian design, engraved with signatures, 78 oz. 15 dwt., £33.

Silver sold in the country by John Norton included a pair of George III salvers, 1776, by Jas. Young, 32 oz., £34; a George II tankard, 1759, by John Kenterber, 28 oz., £40, and another tankard, 1763, 9 oz., for £10.

**FURNITURE.** On 15th December a Queen Anne walnut bureau-cabinet, with mirror doors, sloping front and drawers below, 41 in. wide, brought 170 gns. at Christie's. A William and Mary yew-wood cabinet, with numerous drawers enclosed by a pair of doors, on a later stand, 42 in. wide, 120 gns. Yew-wood veneer was employed less frequently than walnut, although it is a wood of very ancient use in England, especially in its use by mediaeval bowmen, who selected branches to make their long bows. Burr-yew, closely resembling amboyna, is certainly amongst the loveliest of the woods used by the cabinet-maker. A Queen Anne walnut



upright secretaire, with fall-down front, 48 in. wide, made 90 gns. This type of late XVIIth century or early XVIIIth century secretaire, with an arrangement of small drawers and pigeon-holes, usually centred with a cupboard containing still more small drawers, and with a front letting down to provide writing space, is ordinarily of less value than the secretaire cabinet, which has shelves for books or china in the upper part, and drawers and a smaller arrangement of pigeon-holes and long drawers enclosed by a sloping front in the lower part. One reason for this is, no doubt, that the former type, when opened, protrudes further and is less convenient for smaller rooms. The fall-down type was frequently made with a marquetry decoration, and in the days before simplicity and plain wood were the fashion in furniture, the more elaborate examples commanded very high prices. Late Georgian mahogany breakfast tables, with the single column and splayed leg support, intended to be placed near the window of the dining-room, were for family use when the larger dining-table was not needed. Nowadays these small tables, most of which can seat six or eight persons, are bought as dining-tables for flats or small houses. A mahogany table of this type, with oval top, 65 in. wide, brought 58 gns. A Sheraton mahogany pedestal sideboard, with brass back-rail, 60 ins. wide, made 18 gns., and another with serpentine-front and supported on tapering legs and not the less-popular pedestals as in the former case, 52 in. wide, 42 gns.

Sotheby's last sale of furniture before Christmas included a rare George I walnut bureau cabinet, of unusually narrow size, 2 ft. 6 in. wide. This had mirror doors in the upper part and the architectural pediment was centred with a gilt cartouche. It made £480. A fine pair of early Georgian walnut wall mirrors, which went extremely well with the bureau, having gilt swan-neck pediments, made £260. These three pieces had previously belonged to the late Percival Griffiths, who formed a famous collection of furniture, much of which is illustrated in furniture books. A set of four late XVIIIth century Italian chairs, with unusually wide-spread arms made £85, and an Italian marquetry commode with two deep drawers, 55 in. wide, brought £16. Other Continental furniture included a set of six attractive Dutch dining chairs in chestnut and of late XVIIIth century date, which brought £30 the set. A small XVIIIth century Continental bow-fronted commode, veneered with kingwood, 22 in. wide, made £19, and a Dutch small mahogany commode, with shelves enclosed by a pair of doors, with ormolu urn escutcheons, 3 ft. 11 in. wide, £20. These prices show for how much less it is possible to buy Continental pieces, other than French, compared to English-made pieces of the same period and quality. A Sheraton cheval glass, with a mahogany frame and U-shaped legs, 26 in. wide, £12. A Jacobean oak box settle, with conventional carved decoration, 40 in. wide, £36. A Queen Anne burr-walnut bureau bookcase, of exceptionally good colour, with shaped and bevelled mirror-plates in the upper part, 3 ft. 5 in. wide, made £250, and another early XVIIIth century walnut secretaire-cabinet, but with panelled instead of mirror doors, 3 ft. 3 in. wide, brought £125.

At Phillips, Son and Neale a narrow Queen Anne walnut bureau bookcase, 24 in. wide, made £85; a set of eleven mahogany chairs of Chippendale design, with interlaced splats, £74; a William and Mary seaweed marquetry chest of drawers, 39 in. wide, £72; a set of six XVIIIth century English mahogany chairs, with backs of Gothic design, £92, and a set of five Hepplewhite chairs, £110. £70 was bid for a Charles II lacquer cabinet on a silver-gilt carved wood stand. So many of these cabinets, with their arrangement of small drawers, have been sent for sale from large country houses in recent years that it is unusual for one, unless of exceptional quality, to bring more than £50. Knight, Frank and Rutley sold a mahogany breakfront bookcase, 5 ft. 4 in. wide, for £68; a mahogany "D"-end two-pedestal dining-table for £42, and another, with three pillars, extending to 11 ft., for £75. A finely figured Georgian mahogany secretaire cabinet, 4 ft. wide, made £52. At Puttick and Simpson an Irish Chippendale mahogany centre table, 28 in. wide, made £30; a Georgian mahogany bureau, £45, and a set of six mahogany chairs, of Chippendale pattern, for £85.

At a country sale at Lindridge House, Worcestershire, John Norton sold an early Chippendale mahogany armchair, in the French taste, covered in green silk damask, for £70; a small Sheraton mahogany escritoire, inlaid with holly, for £52; two Queen Anne walnut chests of drawers for £59 and £60, and a Queen Anne walnut side or dressing-table, 3 ft. wide, for £62 10s.

**PORCELAIN.** Christie's sold a Derby dinner and dessert service of unusually large size on 15th December. It comprised one hundred and seventy-seven pieces, and was painted with bouquets on a dark blue ground. 550 gns. were paid for it, and 250 gns. for another Derby dinner service, decorated in Oriental style, of one hundred and twenty-five pieces. A gold anchor Chelsea dessert service, with waved and gilt borders with blue riband ties, of forty-three pieces, made 190 gns. A Sèvres cabaret, of 1775, gilded by Le Guay and painted by Levé Pere, of ten pieces, the plateau 14½ in. wide, 280 gns.

Puttick and Simpson sold twelve Vienna dessert plates with two dishes, painted with flowers, for £40; a set of five Dresden figures from the monkey band, £36, and a pair of Dresden figures of a lady

and a gentleman, 18 in. high, for £30. Phillips, Son and Neale auctioned a pair of Dresden dessert stands with Bacchanalian figures in high relief, 17 in. high, for £90.

**CARPETS AND RUGS.** The auction prices for these dropped steeply during the past year, but since the devaluation the prices have been rising again. The following were sold at Christie's. A collector's XVIIth century Polish rug, sold with certificates from the directors of the Imperial Austrian Museum, Vienna, and of the Budapest Museum, 6 ft. 7 in. by 4 ft. 2 in., 110 gns. A Kirman carpet, on a blue and white ground, 15 ft. by 11 ft. 2 in., 50 gns.; a Persian carpet, with dark blue ground, 13 ft. by 9 ft. 11 in., 85 gns.; another, also with blue ground, 16 ft. 7 in. by 11 ft. 5 in., 125 gns. A fine quality Persian carpet, with flowering stems on a red ground, 13 ft. 3 in. by 10 ft. 1 in., made 340 gns., and a Bokhara corridor carpet, 18 ft. 9 in. by 4 ft. 8 in., 36 gns. Another Bokhara woven with octagonal medallions, 11 ft. 7 in. by 6 ft. 10 in., made 95 gns. In the sale of December 15th a Turkish silk rug with a brilliant ruby ground, 9 ft. 10 in. by 6 ft. 8 in., brought 180 gns. A Fereghan carpet, 11 ft. 6 in. by 5 ft. 8 in., 64 gns.; a Kashan on a red and blue ground, 15 ft. 10 in. by 10 ft. 8 in., 195 gns. A Chinese carpet, 12 ft. 10 in. by 10 ft., made £90, and another, slightly smaller, with a red ground, 180 gns.

The following were sold at Sotheby's: Turcoman. All woven in typical style, with lozenge medallions on wine fields intersected with blue lines. A carpet, 10 ft. 7 in. by 7 ft. 10 in., £95. A carpet, 11 ft. 5 in. by 8 ft. 6 in., £80. A carpet, 9 ft. 3 in. by 6 ft. 7 in., £75. A rug, 6 ft. 1 in. by 4 ft. 2 in., £40. Another, 6 ft. 8 in. by 4 ft. 5 in., £22.

Fereghan. Mostly woven with a close foliate and floral design on a dark blue field, known as *herati* pattern. A rug, 6 ft. 4 in. by 4 ft. 4 in., £30. Another, 10 ft. 9 in. by 4 ft., £9. A carpet, 15 ft. by 12 ft. 6 in., £185.

Shirvan. Woven with medallions and conventional motifs. A carpet, 11 ft. 6 in. by 8 ft., £80; a rug, 4 ft. 11 in. by 3 ft. 3 in., £34; another, 4 ft. 10 in. by 3 ft. 4 in., £16. A rug, 4 ft. 10 in. by 3 ft. 9 in., £18.

Kashan. A rug, woven with a design of scrolling flowers and foliage, in red and blue on an ivory field, 6 ft. 11 in. by 4 ft. 3 in., £40. A hunting rug, 7 ft. 1 in. by 4 ft. 5 in., £48. A rug, 6 ft. 8 in. by 4 ft. 2 in., £34; another, 7 ft. by 4 ft. 5 in., £56; another, 7 ft. by 4 ft. 6 in., £75; another, slightly larger, £120.

Kirman. Woven with garden patterns of close foliage, with medallions. A carpet, 10 ft. 4 in. by 7 ft., with a café-au-lait field, £200. Another, 7 ft. 4 in. by 4 ft. 8 in., £52. A rug, 7 ft. 7 in. by 4 ft. 3 in., £64. A prayer rug, the *mihrab*, woven with palaces and hunting animals, 7 ft. 7 in. by 4 ft. 6 in., £66. A rug, 7 ft. 1 in. by 5 ft., £48. A carpet, 13 ft. 10 in. by 10 ft. 2 in., £130.

Various. A Soumac (tapestry-woven) carpet, 9 ft. 2 in. by 6 ft. 11 in., £21. A runner woven in Kurdistan style, 14 ft. 7 in. by 3 ft. 1 in., £18. A Herez carpet, with a red field, 15 ft. 10 in. by 11 ft., £25. Another, similar, 14 ft. 3 in. by 9 ft. 4 in., £38. An Anatolian prayer rug, with pale green *mihrab*, 7 ft. by 4 ft., £48. A good Karabagh runner, 18 ft. 7 in. by 3 ft. 3 in., £40. A Persian carpet, with a floral medallion on a peach field, 10 ft. 3 in. by 6 ft. 8 in., £60. A fine hunting carpet, with floral sprays and animals, 11 ft. 4 in. by 7 ft. 11 in., £210. A Persian carpet, with pale blue field and a gold shaped medallion, 11 ft. 8 in. by 8 ft. 4 in., £115.

At a sale at Hove, Graves, Son and Pilcher sold three fine Hereke silk rugs, 5 ft. 5 in. by 3 ft. 8 in., 5 ft. 9 in. by 3 ft. 11 in., and 5 ft. 8 in. by 4 ft., which realised £400, £390 and £260 respectively.

**FABERGE.** A silver oblong cigarette case, sold at Sotheby's, with close grooving and a ruby thumbpiece, made £20, and a boudoir trinket formed as an elephant, with rubies and rose diamonds on white enamel, and the howdah set with diamonds and rubies, £250.

**MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.** An extremely rare English harpsichord, by Joseph Tisseran, was sold at Sotheby's and realised £650. When this instrument was being restored by Henry Tull, in 1939, the date 1700 was found in the interior. With it were sold two remarkable letters regarding the choice, despatch and care of the instrument. These are of such unusual interest that we will reprint them in full in our next issue.

## TORQUAY

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